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The Saturday Review of Literature

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

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INTERNATIONALISM OF THE FUTURE?
Reproduced from the Peaceable Kingdom, by Edward Hicks.

Popularizers

WE publish in our "Points of View" columns today a group of letters attacking the scholarship of two recent books that have already won wide popular acclaim. Burton Rascoe's "Titans of Literature" is full of gusto, vigor, and the freshness of an independent mind. He praises, or quarrels with, his titans as if they were his contemporaries. Hendrik Van Loon, in his "Geography," takes geographical facts of history already familiar to specialists and remakes them into a readable pattern of the world as a geographer sees it. This *Review* has already reviewed both books, pointing out their value as the work of skilled "vulgarisateurs," and some of their factual deficiencies, and we do not propose to review them again here. But these letters, with their weight of charges, especially against "Titans of Literature," stir an old indignation against the obscurantism of scholars and the carelessness of popularizers.

For if the scholars had done their job effectively there would have been no room and no need for the fictitious biographies as interesting as a novel, but quite untrue, for the cheap, inaccurate popularizations of science and philosophy, for the histories of literature where prejudice and opinion spring airily from pseudo fact to error, or for such valiant efforts as that of Mr. Van Loon who, after all, is a historian trying to do a job which the real geographers seem to have neglected.* Scholars, and especially American scholars, and the most of all American literary scholars, have been warped and sometimes sterilized by the Alexandrian vice of specialism. The work they have done has been important, but they have regarded it as the only legitimate work. In the attempt to be scientific they have made literature and biography dull, criticism abstract, and have piled up a mass of heterogeneous facts so high, so wide, that life is stifled and interest dies. They know more than they can make use of, and hence the honest reader or student, in a frightening percentage of cases, has not been able to make use of them. There are notable exceptions, of course, an increasing number of exceptions, but many competent observers, not unaware of the value of scholarship, feel that of the great structures erected by literary scholarship in the past half century too many are fossil—bones without blood or flesh. Only now and then does some man of life and courage try to make the dinosour walk.

Hence the journalists have rushed in, the able writers untrained in research but well aware of the difference between a hawk and a handsaw. Sufferers themselves in university classes conducted by rigid specialists, they have said, "But these poets, these dramatists, these critics, were once alive—their work has life in it still, it is current for us, it is important, and we will make it seem so." And they write books that are read.

It is the old sad story—if only the wise were able, if only the able were wise.

(*Continued on page 353*)

* This statement is open to dispute. But certainly no geographer has succeeded with the public to which Mr. Van Loon is appealing.

Lighted City

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THROUGH the dusk, as the lighted towers
To north and west—
Each beacon marked for ours—
Lift crest on crest
Till our tall dark windows gleam
With glittering, fabulous light,
One moment stand and dream
With me, tonight!

Through the cold, through the harrying heat,
With ancient fears,
Those streets have known our feet,
Those walls our tears,
Though now for a magical space
We stand aloof above
A maze we may not retrace,
Alone with our love.

Yet, through our wounds made part
Of the shuddering beat
Of the city's dungeoned heart
From street to street,
Its desert days and nights
Lift us at last to share
This dream of glittering lights—
A city in air.

For us they flare, those fires
Against dark powers
Blazing from golden pyres
On striding towers!
O love, the lighted skies
Cry, "Night is overthrown!"
Now, as you raise your eyes
To find my own.

The Task Before Mr. Roosevelt

By JAMES T. SHOTWELL

MR. FRANK SIMONDS, who was one of the outstanding American commentators upon the World War, has now become one of the most penetrating analysts of peace problems. He has just produced the most challenging book on the most challenging theme in our political outlook today. The title does not do it justice, for the question which it asks is much more searching than the simple query whether or not our period of "splendid isolation" is over. It is the question as to what lies behind policies and politics, what elements in the temper and experience of the United States, in its moral outlook, political leadership, or material interests, explain the situation in which it finds itself today; what are the realities in its relations with other nations, the compelling facts from which there is no escape, the problems with which it must reckon, and reckon accurately, if it is to play its part in the great drama of world affairs. The single question in the title is only the last of many raised in the course of a most penetrating analysis of ourselves and other peoples.

The book is, therefore, much more than a product of journalism, alert to catch the attention of readers by the discussion of a topic of the time; it is a thoughtful work, seriously conceived, written for the most part in the white heat of conviction and is at its best when most in disagreement with prevailing national attitudes and accepted policy.

It is, however, an established fact that when explorers traverse high altitudes, all the latent sources of disagreement in their subconscious selves begin to show themselves and differences in opinion take on something of that distinctness of outline which marks the external perspective in a rarified atmosphere. Mr. Simonds is too experienced a guide not to be aware of this danger; but he delights in the risk, not because it adds to the zest of the enterprise, but because he honestly disagrees with much that other people have taken for granted, and sees no way out of the wilderness in which we have been wandering unless we try new paths. It is to be expected, therefore, that few readers will agree with everything in the book. But if it stirs a critical re-examination of opinions rooted in prejudice and opens our eyes to the fact that a nation, like an individual, is most lost when it moves in blind circles; if it then points a way out, however hard, it will have accomplished its purpose, even if we ultimately find other paths as well. What the author asks is that we face the task as frankly and fearlessly as he has done, and that we cease cherishing delusions which lead to disaster.

Like all worthwhile guides to the understanding of the present, Mr. Simonds finds the explanations in the past. The two outstanding facts in our foreign relations have been the isolation of America, and the "evangelical impulse" to convert others to our point of view. He does not delay over the problem as to how much the psychology depends upon the situation, whether the moral urge of the missionary effort was also largely strengthened by the self-centered life of an isolated community, cherishing its own ideals whether religious or political with the conviction that comes from habit undisturbed and doctrine enforced by mass psychology. But whatever the fundamental explanation of the American outlook, Mr. Simonds is quite clear that the thing which characterizes it throughout is not, as the superficial observer has maintained, a materialistic interest, at least not a conscious one, but a moral purpose. This is what other people find so hard to understand in us. We take it for granted, because it is only the application to secular pursuits of our religious convictions. In the course of our history, "Insensibly the mission of converting the heathen to the Christian religion had been expanding into the task of spreading abroad the benefits of American education and the blessings of American science, sanitation, and surgery." . . . "America itself was in fact becoming a religion for the people of the United States and the old missionary spirit was being transformed into what would henceforth be described as American idealism." . . . "That was why Woodrow Wilson, in presenting his Fourteen Points to the European tribes in conflict, could adopt the tone of Moses transmitting his revelation from Sinai." No wonder Europeans mistook this idealism for hypocrisy, for they lacked both the "instinct for isolation and the impulse to evangelical enterprise."

The historian will hardly rest satisfied with the few pages into which the period of American history between 1898 and 1917 is fitted into this interpretation of why and how the United States entered the theatre of world affairs. This, however, is only the approach to the central theme of the book, which is a topical survey of the history of the foreign relations

CAN AMERICA STAY AT HOME? By FRANK H. SIMONDS. New York: Harper & Bros. 1932. $3.

This Week

"BARABBAS."
Reviewed by LOLA RIDGE.
"ALICE IN WONDERLAND."
By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.
"MAN AND MASK."
Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL.
"HORIZONS."
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"JOHN CLARE."
Reviewed by GEORGE MCLEAN HARPER.
"CAPSTAN BARS."
Reviewed by FRANK SHAY.
"THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BECKFORD."
Reviewed by WILMARTH S. LEWIS.
"THE STRANGEST FRIENDSHIP IN HISTORY."
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"MY FRIENDLY CONTEMPORARIES."
Reviewed by WILLIAM LYON PHELPS.
TRANSLATIONS FROM THE CHINESE.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.
THIS WILL NEVER DO.
Letters by EDITH HAMILTON, DONALD A. ROBERTS, and GEORGE REBEC.

Next Week, or Later

WALTER LIPPMANN.
By JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS.

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of the United States from 1914 to the present. The survey is divided into three main sections with captions which suggest the point of view, "Internationalism—Wilson," "Isolation—Harding and Coolidge," "Interference—Hoover." In a final section, "The American Problem," the author sums up his conclusions. Like all of Mr. Simonds's writing, the arrangement as well as the narrative is clear cut and logical. So easily does the narrative run that the reader is hardly aware of the compression of detail, the rich mass of factual data which is crowded into the narrative. Nevertheless, some of it will be hard reading, not only for those who complacently accepted isolation and "normalcy," but even more for those who regarded President Hoover's leadership as having really accomplished something in international affairs. The substitution of arithmetic for constructive policies in both Disarmament and War Debts is charged against the present administration whose business it has been to liquidate the negative mistakes of the eight previous years. The allotment of blame, however, is less important than the general trend of the indictment which the narrative carries along from the close of the war to the present moment.

The story begins with Woodrow Wilson. It represents a paradox of which the author could hardly have been aware. One feels that Mr. Simonds began his analysis of Wilson's policy with an emphasis upon those elements in the make-up of the "Great War President" which embodied the moralistic outlook of America, and which therefore distorted realities in the international scene. He is presented as a sectarian preacher, relying upon mere words to rivet together the broken fragments of civilization, where only force could prevail. And yet, as the study progresses, the figure of Wilson emerges from this preliminary explanation, apparently in spite of it, until he stands out ultimately as the one epochal figure pointing the way to a new era of genuine internationalism. He is even freer from the trammels of traditional thinking than his

"CAN AMERICA STAY AT HOME?"
From Highlights, by Rollin Kirby (Payson).

genuine internationalism as the parochial isolation of America. Thus we come upon the surprising fact that Mr. Simonds, who had so long and so bitterly criticized the idealistic trend of Wilson's thinking, now offers one of the finest tributes ever paid to the greatest statesman of the World War, as the first to reinterpret in terms of a world community the obligation of citizenship within the nation, the first real spokesman of the new era.

Nevertheless, says Mr. Simonds, Wilson's internationalism did not find a perfect embodiment in the Covenant of the League of Nations, because his program "would not engage American resources in the maintenance of peace, but only in perpetuating the results of war." It is clear that this conclusion is based upon scepticism as to the efficacy of the League, or any other devices for pacific settlement of international disputes, to secure modifications of the major clauses of the treaties of peace. It is, in Mr. Simonds's eyes, a fallacy of American thinking from first to last that the *status quo* can be changed by any process of sweet reasonableness. "Treaty revision is today impossible because of the resolution of satisfied peoples to retain their present territories," and "if the determination of both *Status Quo* and Revision peoples continues unmodified, war is inescapable and no international machinery can prevent it." In other words, in spite of professions to the contrary, war remains in the minds of European peoples an instrument of national policy to which resort is all too likely, unless there is some way to coerce restive governments or nations and force them to refrain from action. In this regard the Wilson philosophy is, so Mr. Simonds holds, better than the Hoover-Stimson doctrine, for the League at least is realistic enough to oppose acts by acts, instead of only by words. American opinion, however, will not agree to an indefinite commitment to the Wilsonian philosophy, because it would engage the United States to maintain the *status quo* forever. Now the forces of revision are gathering such menacing strength that mere preachments are of no avail. The United States, in rejecting the Wilson program, "has sought to conduct all its international relations in such fashion as to exercise influence without assuming corresponding duty. And, in order to justify such a course, it has attempted to establish the idea that the problems of peace and war are questions of morals and therefore without political content. Such a course is foredoomed to futility."

The full measure of this futility is now becoming evident in the disarmament fiasco. Disarmament by arithmetical ratios has no relation to the deadly realities for which armaments exist. From the Washington Conference to the last one in Geneva, America has misled itself and tried to mislead other nations by stating the Disarmament negotiations.

Both Wilson's program of general political responsibility and the effort of his successors to find a substitute are to be kept in mind in any practical suggestions for the present. Mr. Simonds's suggestion, however, is above all practical. In the face of immediate dangers, the United States should take an obligation, limited in both time and scope, to support the forces of peace by insisting upon at least a truce in Europe.

> The United States might agree to implement the Pact of Paris for a period of five or even ten years by its promise to join all other signatory powers in economic and financial sanctions against a nation which refused to evacuate foreign territory which it had invaded and persisted in hostilities.
>
> Or at the very least, the United States might consent during such time to refrain from all action likely to lessen the efficacy of the sanctions of the League powers. Such a step would obviously be taken without prejudice to the basic issues dividing European people and with the sole purpose to establish a new "Truce of Locarno" during the present period of economic and financial stress on the Continent.

This juristic armistice is advanced upon the theory that the dangers of the immediate future are such as to call for an exceptional emergency policy upon the part of the United States. But the question arises whether an emergency action of this kind would really give that sense of security which is the essential basis of peace. In the effort to be sternly realistic as to the inherent limitations of the American outlook which prevents Mr. Simonds from accepting the League of Nations, has he proposed a measure which would be really satisfactory to either Europe or ourselves? Is the other alternative entirely ruled out, which would strengthen the process of pacific settlement by American membership in both Court and League? In short, does not the final problem of world statesmanship center upon the erection of a suitable permanent framework for embodying policy and securing justice, rather than insisting upon armistice or moratorium? Surely after our experience with the debt moratorium we should be slow to engage upon a moratorium that would leave us in a very questionable position at the end of the term.

Whatever differences of opinion there may be upon these points, there can be no disagreement on the statement which forms the concluding paragraph of the book:

> The task of the statesmanship of tomorrow has thus been clarified by the failures of the recent past. But the performance of that task must still await the arrival of a President or Secretary of State with the courage and capacity to explain to the American public that the profits of international peace can only be shared by peoples prepared to pay the [illegible]

BARABBAS, a Dramatic Narrative. By SARA BARD FIELD. New York: A. & C. Boni. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by LOLA RIDGE

LIKE all great stories, embedded in the histories of peoples, records in which it is difficult to separate fact from legend, the narrative of Jesus not only invites endless recreation and reinterpretation, it contains in embryo numerous other stories. Uncounted figures weave in and out through its milling crowds, glimmer and disappear, obscured by the lengthening shadow of the Form hoisted above them.—No—not quite disappear, withdraw rather, to stand waiting through the ages for the voice that shall make articulate their murmurous silence. Out of this throng of the anonymous and the known, Sara Bard Field has chosen the prominent but hitherto neglected figure of Barabbas for the central character of her long dramatic poem.

Barabbas is mentioned by John as "a robber," by Matthew as "a notable prisoner," Mark speaks of him as one "who had made insurrection in the city," Luke, as one "who for a certain sedition made in the city and for murder was cast into prison." In the version of each we glimpse him for a moment only. He is like a fatherless spark blown from some unknown fire, even as he flickers into life the quenching shadow of the Cross falls upon him and he sinks again into darkness. But under the kindly glow of this poet's thought he becomes a notable and heroic figure, a rebel and defender of the liberties of his people. This interpretation is, as far as I know, here put forward for the first time. It is a truly creative one and serves to relate this book to a generation that has seen simple-hearted but politically nonconforming idealists like Sacco and Vanzetti branded and condemned as common criminals.

The central thread of the poem, the theme within its theme, is the conflict between two irreconcilable ideals,—the dream of Jesus of universal brotherhood and the liberation of the spirit from material bonds and the opposing idea of national independence, the belief in the separate destiny and the ultimate supremacy of his people, that is the faith of Mrs. Fields's Barabbas. We follow his spiritual development from a boyhood, fed by heroic tales, into old age, and we are shown upon the way the stormy Judaic world of his experience. One of the followers of Judas of Galilee (who led a revolt against the taxation laws of Quirinius) he joins a group of young revolutionists and is convicted for his activities. After the Crucifixion he is succoured by the friends of Jesus, at the cost of whose life his own was spared and whose creed he had despised. Wounded and weak from prison he is nursed back to health in the house of Martha and Mary and there first feels the doubt, that is henceforth to abide with him, of the rightness of his own implacable way. But it is only in old age when his own eager hopes have been defeated that the conflict in his soul is resolved. His growing vision has pushed out its boundaries and at last, on its extended circle, the opposing ideals meet:

> Now let the pen carefully thread this narrow
> Channel from faith to faith nor be too kind
> To me at truth's expense. Had I been blind
> To count of Roman over Hebrew arrow
> Nor won discernment from defeat my mind
> No more than Judas' sons had left behind
> The bone of old belief for richer marrow.
>
> "Without a miracle our cause is laughter
> Of fools, faith's folly, a blind vision's cheat"
> I once had told them, taught by first defeat
> Inexorable number and long after
> That miracle as either post or rafter
> To any house of hate is pride's deceit.
>
> Thus I embraced new faith as a mature
> Widower remarries, unashamed
> Because the rainbow passion arching pure
> Color through intellect did not obscure
> Assurance the bride's dowery was secure
> For now I saw the Nazarene had named
> Israel's only surety to endure
>
> In body as in soul, in temple and tower
> In stone as in the spirit which would fly
> Forever past corruption.

Sara Bard Field does not speak with the modern accent. Her book might have been written in the world she depicts, a world that had yet unknown continents and virgin islands for the taking and in which men perhaps had simpler if not less bloody problems on their souls. It is evident the poet has pondered long her rich material. She has missed few of the important personages or major happenings of the time. As when one rubs a fluid over a many peopled but faded painting blurred and half forgotten figures start to life. None, not even that of her protagonist, is permitted to overgrow his place and obscure any part of the background in a picture extraordinarily complete.

While her presentation is not equal, as poetry, to her very fine conception, it is a notable achievement and has dignity and authenticity. She has organized a wealth of material into an imposing whole. She can inject a fresh ferment into the flattened words of common speech or present a familiar happening in a lovely and arresting image:

> A split pomegranate showering her seeds
> The starry night burst open.

The poem gains in momentum as it progresses and the last half is the better. There is spontaneous movement in its ordered lines that are suffused throughout with the clear glow of spiritual intention. Until the close they have a tireless flow as though from some undepleted source.

Lola Ridge is a poet of note whose own religious narrative poem, "Firehead," won high commendation when it appeared in 1930.

"Dingley Dell," the legendary scene of Pickwick's amusing Christmas adventures, was devastated by fire Christmas morning. It was a large country house near Maidstone called Cob Tree Manor. The roof rafters of the great hall fell in a blazing mass, only part of the walls remaining.

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The Theatre

ALICE IN WONDERLAND. The Civic Repertory Theatre.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

WITH a revived intention to notice in its pages such current plays as may appear in book form, or otherwise have a bearing upon literature past and present, *The Saturday Review of Literature's* representative chose, for his first production, to attend Miss Eva Le Gallienne's presentation of Lewis Carroll's masterpiece, in her repertory theatre on Fourteenth Street. The week of our attendance there were three performances of "Alice." In the same week, Miss Le Gallienne put on two performances of "Liliom," one of "Camille," and one of "Peter Pan"! The Civic Repertory Theatre is now in its sixth season. Its permanent company numbers twenty-eight. Miss Le Gallienne's achievement has been remarkable.

The stage version of "Alice" is founded upon "Through the Looking Glass." The delightful music that accompanies it is by Richard Addinsell. Throckmorton's settings and Irene Sharaff's scenery and costumes, designed after the famous illustrations by Sir John Tenniel, together with the ingenuity of the diorama and other effects, brilliantly enhance the acting. Miss Le Gallienne's direction is well-nigh perfect, and it is hard to see how Carroll's masterpiece of inspired nonsense could have been adapted to the stage more effectively. Cavillers will contend that the feat is impossible and refuse to see the famous fantastic characters step out of the printed page. It is their loss. We ourself were deeply impressed by the fidelity with which the latter were presented on the boards. Illusion seemed to us beautifully preserved. Miss Hutchinson, as is hinted at in the accompanying illustration, perfectly looked the part of the little English girl heroine. Her readings were not always adequate,—at times subject to criticism. One speculated as to how Dorothy Gish might have handled the part; but physically Miss Hutchinson was a remarkably satisfactory embodiment of Alice. From the rest of the cast there are certain ones we would single out for special praise.

Our own particular encomia incline to the Queens. Joseph Schildkraut played the Queen of Hearts with quite the proper

JOSEPHINE HUTCHINSON AS TENNIEL'S ALICE.

ferocity. As the White Chess Queen, Miss Le Gallienne herself was, of course, excellent, and Leona Roberts, as the Red Chess Queen, gave a most authoritative performance. We should like also to put in a particular word for Margaret Love as the "Sheep" in "Wool and Water." Landon Herrick, as the Mad Hatter, handled beautifully a particularly difficult part. Sayre Crawley's "Caterpillar" and Howard da Silva's "White Knight" were full of relish. Harold Moulton was a successful King of Hearts. Yet it seems almost invidious to discriminate, when the whole company in their various roles appeared to enter with such rare intelligence into the spirit of the occasion. Also, the marionette spectacle of the Walrus and the Carpenter —it will be long before we forget those innocently-shod oysters!—proved one of the sublimest features of the evening. Remo Bufano's success with animal heads, masks, and marionettes is beyond question.

After a fashion we are sorry that this our first attempt at reporting the theatre afforded us no real ground for criticism. The fact is that her "Alice in Wonderland" seems to us a new triumph of Miss Le Gallienne's. Her belief that the theatre has failed as an "industry" and is seen at its best in "the hands of the workers who love it" is a belief she has maintained through unremitting toil with her materials and the exercise of as finished an art and as fine an intelligence as the theatre of America can boast today. "Alice" is not the most ambitious thing she has attempted, but in it she must have encountered all sorts of new difficulties. She enjoys surmounting difficulties. The result is that, in the Christmas season, she has provided a recreation for the theatre-goer superior to most London pantomimes. How awful it would have been to see Lewis Carroll and Alice betrayed by a Broadwayish stage adaptation. And how we rubbed our eyes again and again at the super-workmanlike creation of Eva Le Gallienne and Florida Friebus. Leaving the theatre we wore the unvanishing grin of the Cheshire Cat!

Musician and Man

MAN AND MASK. By FEODOR CHALIAPIN. Translated from the French by PHYLLIS MÉGROZ. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932. $3.50.

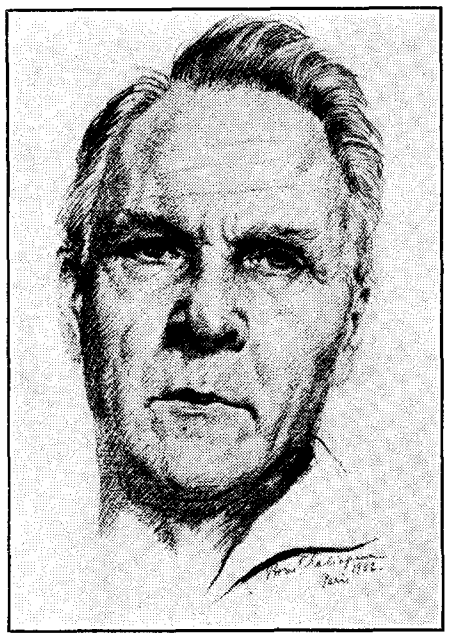
Reviewed by ARTHUR RUHL

THE great Chaliapin has played a frequently misunderstood and sometimes rather ridiculous role since the Russian Revolution, and that he should do so was almost inevitable.

A man of the people, who had come up from the bottom just as did his one-time friend, Gorky; a veritable museum piece of that "broad nature, doing nothing by halves," on which even the old Russian Baedeker used fondly to dwell, he had, in the past, shocked and infuriated both petty bureaucrats and the more conventional sort of artists, and now and then exhibited his sympathy for the "workers" by some such gesture as that famous one at Kiev, in 1905, when, in a huge hall packed with factory hands and patrolled by suspicious plain-clothes men, he sang for the first time in public the provocative "Doubinouchka," with the whole proletarian audience roaring the chorus.

If there had been no revolution, and the tempestuous opera singer could have defied the police, as he rode roughshod over orchestra conductors and the somewhat petrified artistic canons of the Russian State theatres, in the comparatively safe role of a popular idol, Chaliapin would doubtless have remained a sort of revolutionist. But just such a popular idol as Chaliapin was, making his own esthetic laws, living the life of a millionaire, however sentimental he might be about the unspoiled Russian landscape, vodka-and-cucumbers, fly-specked railway buffets, and all the lingering medievalism of that once uniquely charming land, presupposes precisely the existence of a capitalistic, not to say imperial order, with its huge material prizes, luxurious living, fine clothes, champagne, and all the rest of it —the very order which revolution, if logically pursued, was bound to destroy. When the final crash came, there was no place left for him. He floundered about for a time, shifted from "Soloist to His Majesty" to "Premier Singer to the Soviet People," made several experimental forays over the Soviet Chinese wall into Europe and back again, and finally burned his bridges or had them burnt for him, and became an out and out emigré.

Briefly, Chaliapin's remarks on acting, singing, make-up, and stage management, the discussion of his various roles, his quotations from other artists and accounts of various artistic arguments and struggles, are those of an enthusiastic realist, impatient of formalism in general and in smooth sterility of the *bel canto* school. At first, as a struggling young singer of the provinces, he spent sleepless nights trying to decide whether he should plump



FEODOR CHALIAPIN.

for *La Donna e mobile* or "In the big town of Kazan." The young men about him all thought the former the right stuff for singers; Moussorgski, they said, "with his Varlaams and Mitouks, is literally poison for the voice and singing."

Chaliapin's physique and temperament, his origin, upbringing, and essential Russianism, soon decided the question for him in any case. Moussorgski became his hero, or at any rate one of them, and one of his deepest regrets was that the composer died before the young singer arrived in Petersburg. "It was an overwhelming loss to me. It was as though I had failed to catch a momentous train—reaching the station as it steamed away before my eyes—for ever. . . ."

The melody and lyricism of Italian music might do very well for others; it seemed to have been composed "for a people endowed with musical gifts who, when they had heard and memorized an opera, would henceforth sing its charming airs in the sad and joyful moments of their lives. Russian music, including that of Moussorgski, is the entire antithesis of this school. The melody is there, but it is of an entirely different character. In Russian music, melody is the medium through which the atmosphere is suggested and the drama unfolded; it expresses love and hate in a far more profound and penetrating manner."

If these earlier chapters are "less interesting" than the second half of the book, the cause lies in the need for more thoroughness and more sense of form than the singer gives them—a need less felt in the comparatively objective and factual chapters dealing with Chaliapin's life "in the political and revolutionary whirlpool," "under the Bolsheviks" and "in foreign lands."

A picture of Edith Sitwell recently reproduced in these columns appeared without a credit line. It was by Stella Bowen.

On Popular Mechanics

HORIZONS. By NORMAN BEL GEDDES. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1932. $4.75.

Reviewed by FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT

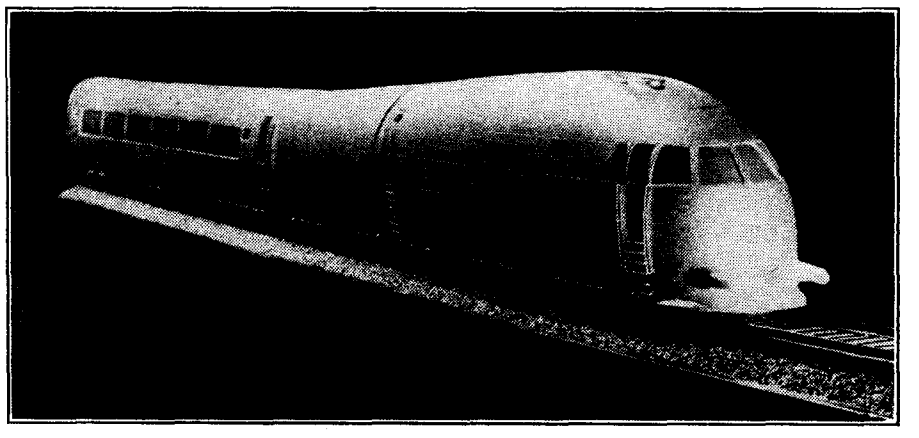
COMRADE BEL GEDDES has left his métier—the theatre—to write a treatise on popular mechanics. He has notions concerning the future of practically everything, but pretty nearly everything begins with the Greeks, the Egyptians, and Cézanne and winds up with Norman Bel Geddes. All trace of intermediate steps he has conscientiously, and characteristically, ignored. Be it said for Norman, however, this is taking the popular architectural pastime of the moment only a step or so further. There has been so much rush for the "modern" bandwagon, such jostling and pushing aside that I, for one, am almost willing to cheer Norman on when he climbs on top of the whole pack with his gesture of—"this world is mine."

But—his senior by several experiences at least—it may be neither unbecoming nor remiss to remind him—for whose performances in the theatre I have a wholesome respect—that lip-service to the results of scientific research by the theoretical designer has little of value to offer either art or industry except as it becomes a sort of stage scenery continued for sensational effect. It is stage scenery that Bel Geddes never forsook when he brought his intellect to bear on motorcars, ships, factories, railways, etc. He is still the scenic artist in all his predilections and these prescriptions. All the good old new-clichés are there, like "has it ever occurred to you that a photograph of a flower, even though devoid of color, might be as thrilling as a painting of it, or that six plough-blades laid side by side and photographed would form a striking pattern?" And others too numerous to mention.

The period which Norman Bel Geddes is satisfied we are now entering upon was entered by mankind so long ago that not only are we already getting used to the changes entailed, we are able to modify them in order to achieve, in many of our industrial products and in our architecture, an appropriate and organic beauty. There is something untrustworthy in the plans, schemes, estimates, and statistics of the intuitive introvert. Even in the name of art in industry his intuition cannot evolve or release the inner structure of the thing itself to the intrinsic beauty that proceeds outward from within. All industrial objects are entitled to that beauty in our era. But Norman Bel Geddes, in spite of his popular mechanics, condemns himself by much that he writes to a rather sentimental and snobbish differentiation between hand power and machine power in the very reactions that should be instinctive and natural and of which he is the would-be, if tardy, champion.

Norman Bel Geddes is a distinguished designer of the spectacle, and as such of no negligible character and valuable to our stage. But, although he has, obviously, profited much by what has gone before him and has embodied it as the best part of his book, his "Horizons" is nevertheless a book apparently written as a primer for those who know art only through the Sunday supplements. I do not say this robs it of any particular value. Perhaps, in that characteristic lies its especial value.

Frank Lloyd Wright is an architect who by many of his fellow-workers in this country has been called a genius. His work is to be found in various parts of the United States. His autobiography was recently published.



DESIGN FOR A LOCOMOTIVE BY NORMAN BEL GEDDES.

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A Poet of the Rural Scene

JOHN CLARE, a Life. By J. W. and ANNE TIBBLE. New York: Oxford University Press. 1932. $3.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE MCLEAN HARPER

SCOTSMEN very properly resent it when Burns is called a "peasant." They deny that Scotland ever has had in modern times an agricultural class like the peasantry of Continental Europe, distinct, unprogressive, and lacking economic and educational opportunity. In many parts of England, however, there was, until a century ago, a well defined body of villagers, agricultural laborers, and even owners of small plots of ground who were so poor and so unprovided with schooling that the term "peasant" exactly indicates their position. John Clare was born and brought up in this class and in a period when it sank to perhaps its most helpless condition. From the year of his birth, 1793, until 1815, there was almost continual warfare between Britain and France, with the usual wartime profiteering by the rich and exploitation of the poor. Then came the enclosure of land previously open to villagers for common pasturage and its seizure and cultivation as private property by wealthy owners. The open heaths and fens where the peasant lad wandered in childhood with attentive eyes and ears were gradually appropriated, fenced in, and brought under the plough or reserved for game. Places dear to his memory, the haunts of birds and the little creatures of the earth, and of gipsies and boys, were desecrated.

Though he had almost no schooling and for many years scarcely any acquaintance with books or educated persons, he composed little poems to express his regret for the loss of so much beauty and freedom. Some of these fell into the hands of a London publisher, who brought them out for him in 1820 under the title "Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery." The book had considerable success, which encouraged Clare to read the works of other poets and to pursue more eagerly the art of versifying. For awhile he enjoyed much popularity and on his visits from his native village in Northamptonshire met in London many of the famous literary men of the day, who treated him very cordially. But his publisher was either dishonest or extremely dilatory and unbusinesslike, and three subsequent volumes of the poor lad's poems were held back so long that he lost touch with his public. The rest is tragedy. The countryside which he loved was ruined by enclosure; he failed to win his first sweetheart; his wife, an unlettered woman, bore him nine children; his aged parents were dependent on him; and in spite of many contributions from well-wishers he was desperately poor. Disappointed and undernourished, he sank beneath the load. Melancholy claimed him for her own, and from 1837 till his death in 1864 he was confined most of the time in asylums for the insane.

Even then, however, he continued to compose. But his readers now were few, his reputation was eclipsed, he was forgotten. In most anthologies he is not represented at all. In "The Oxford Book of English Verse" only one of his poems appears. Professor Saintsbury, in his "Short History of English Literature," superciliously admits that "some pieces of Clare's are poems." To such depths had his fame fallen before 1920; since when, largely through the zeal and taste of Mr. Edmund Blunden, it has been rescued from oblivion; and this excellent biography will doubtless establish it permanently. "Excellent" is indeed too colorless a word for such a book. It is a noble work, well planned, rich in detail, judicious, sympathetic, ably written. Of recent books with a similar purpose, which is to combine biographical information with literary criticism, there is none better. It is neither fictional nor psycho-analytical. The short poems and prose extracts quoted in it will certainly induce readers to turn to Clare's own volumes. The authors, with immense industry, have brought to light much precious material from provincial museums, town libraries, old periodicals, and private letters. Clare is revealed as a naturalist no less than as a poet. His knowledge of plants, birds, small beasts, and landscape was at least equal to Gilbert White's. His familiarity with both human and the non-human rural life brings him in line with George Borrow and W. H. Hudson. In many prose passages quoted in this "Life" the fumbling of an untrained hand changes suddenly to sure and elegant mastery either for description of nature or for subjective reflection. Some of the poems are valuable experiments in rhythm. One peculiar philosophic idea runs through Clare's writings, namely that nature and childhood are unaware of decay, and therefore eternity is timelessness. In his years of sanity, no less than when he had lost hold of what we call reality, he felt that nothing ever ends and time is an illusion. Certainly the writers of this noble biography have shown that

> If a star were confin'd into a tomb,
> The captive flames must needs burn there.

ILLUSTRATION, BY FREDA BONE, FOR "CAPSTAN BARS."

Shannadore

CAPSTAN BARS. By DAVID W. BONE. With Eight Woodcuts by FREDA BONE. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1932. $2.

Reviewed by FRANK SHAY

IT was a motley crew that answered the bosun's command to turn to and wash down the rusty decks. Men were scarce in 1915 and the skipper of the *Glenpool* was glad to ship boys and old men; Lascars, Swedes, and Americans. Strange as the crew must have appeared to the Spanish bosun its incongruity was emphasized when one of the old men, scrubbing in a filthy scupper, forgot for a moment the time and the place and broke into one of the songs he had sung when the ships were of wood and men were of iron. The haunting loveliness of the grandest of all chanties, "Shenandoah," with its tender cadences and its hearty chorus, will never be forgotten.

"Oh, Shannadore, I love your daughter." Then another old timer, also forgetful of the scene and the task, put in his oar on the chorus lines.

A-way, my roll-ing riv-ver.
I'll take her 'cross yon rushing water.
Ah-ha! We're bound away 'cross the wide Mizzourah!

Oh, Shannadore, she took my fancy.
A-way, my roll-ing riv-ver.
Oh, Shannadore, I love your Nancy.
Ah-ha! We're bound away 'cross the wide Mizzourah!

Oh, Shannadore, I'll ne'er forget you.
A-way, my roll-ing riv-ver.
Till the day I die, I'll love you ever.
Ah-ha! We're bound away 'cross the wide Mizzourah!

That was the beginning. In the three and a half weeks spent on the *Glenpool*, to Tampico for oil and back to Bayonne, the reviewer managed to get on paper the old timers' complete repertories of chanties. Since the war the interest in chanties and other songs of the sea has been whetted by collections that tumbled in a seemingly unending stream from the phesses.

Were it not for its distinguished sponsor "Capstan Bars" might be easily dismissed as another compilation. Captain Bone, now commodore of the Anchor Line, and probably the most famous of the living sailor-authors, is one of the few old-time sailors still on the active list who served his brassbounder years in sail. He has not only heard the songs but performed the tasks they lightened and sung them with his own lips. Today, as Captain Bone knows to his sorrow, no matter how loudly he sang out the command to "heave and chanty up" he would be answered with a gaping silence. Since the days of his apprenticeship the need for song has disappeared; steam and electricity have silenced the singers, and, no matter how willing, the oily enginemen and the men on deck would find their voices dimmed by the machines.

Captain Bone's book is far more than a collection of chanties. In this book he prints the words and airs as they were actually sung on the old ships in the days that are gone forever. Each chanty is accompanied by a clear and concise essay, descriptive of its history and application. The word he gives to lovers of the old songs is the one that was lacking in other collections, that of practical application of the songs to the tasks at which they were sung. It is one thing to say that "Shenandoah" is a capstan chanty, but the song takes on a greater meaning when the author tells us:

> Any good marching song can sometimes be used . . . but the working movement at the capstan is processional rather than marching, and such swinging quick-steps could hardly be maintained by the labored breath of the workers under heavy strain.

And the occasion for "Shenandoah" is when "the land is close aboard, whether astern or ahead." In all Captain Bone gives us three and twenty chanties and the best twenty-three, at that, and a fine lot of deep-water information that most of us have needed these many years. The work is delightfully illustrated in woodcuts by the Captain's daughter, Freda Bone.

"Did people cry out against printing as mechanized literature as they describe broadcasting as mechanized music?" the London *Observer* quotes Sir Walford Davies as saying. "Yes; they did," it replies. "One of them was the Duke of Urbino, who said he 'would be ashamed to possess a printed book'; he kept some forty scribes copying upon parchment. A distant echo of him will be found in 'Saint Joan,' where the nobleman deplores that 'nowadays, instead of looking at books, people read them.' Ruskin got nearer to the parallel when he deplored printed books (which he classed with gunpowder as one of 'the two great curses of the age') on the ground that they 'made people used to having everything the same shape.'"

One of Dr. Johnson's famous definitions not too frequently recalled is: "Brook, a running water less than a river"; and "River, a land current of water bigger than a brook."

An Extraordinary Man

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BECKFORD. By J. W. OLIVER. Oxford University Press. 1932.

Reviewed by WILMARTH S. LEWIS

BECKFORD has had to wait a long time for a good biography, but now he has it. Why he has been neglected is something of a mystery, for in the long line of English eccentrics he must be given first place—not because he was odder than the rest, but because he was richer. Few men can do whatever they please regardless of expense. Beckford could and did and what he did (as he was a genius) is a matter of more than ordinary interest and importance.

No man has more eloquent dates, 1760-1844. He was born at the moment of England's great fulfilment and his godfather and first mentor was the man most responsible for it, the Earl of Chatham. He was taught music by Mozart, the principles of architecture by Sir William Chambers, drawing by Alexander Cozens. When the leading opera singers of Europe came to entertain his youthful guests, de Loutherbourg was brought down from Drury Lane to decorate the house. Voltaire was not insensible to the honor of Beckford's seventeen-year-old presence. When he entered a drawing-room every mamma in it was aware that England's richest young man had arrived. He lived completely through the great industrial and social revolution, from Pitt to Disraeli (both of whom he fascinated), and from Gray to Dickens.

We think of Beckford largely as the author of "Vathek" and the persistent builder of Fonthill, and it will come as a surprise to most to find that he is one of the great English letter-writers. Even when his letters are most thickly involved in the muddied waters of his fevered emotions they force upon the reader the beat of his commanding personality. The literature of these eighty-four years will not be complete until Beckford's letters are published and edited, along with all the other so-called Hamilton papers, and Mr. Oliver is the man to do the job.

If one has any quarrel with Mr. Oliver it is that he is too self-effacing, a rare fault in biographers. His subject and material are so rich his task has not been an easy one and the present work is hardly more than an introduction. He puts his emphasis where it belongs, on Beckford as a romantic, but there are many phases of his personality one would like to know more about. At least one of Mr. Oliver's readers hopes that he will be willing to edit the entire Beckford corpus with the care and industry of a Birbeck Hill. Nineteenth century biographers, one suspects, avoided Beckford as a super Dorian Gray, but Beckford makes him a cheap vulgarian. By his stupendous disregard of the boundaries surrounding ordinary men Beckford somehow transcends him own fabulous Caliph. Now that we know the facts of life we shall not be shocked by William Courtenay, and we are entitled to a full-length study of one of the most extraordinary men that ever walked the planet.

H. G. Wells is, it is said, going to branch out in a new direction shortly—he is to write the "book" of a musical show! Low, the cartoonist, will design the settings.

The Saturday Review of Literature

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The Story of Evelyn

FAMILY HISTORY. By V. SACKVILLE-WEST. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THE total effect of Miss Sackville-West's new book is rather disappointing, not so much because it does not attain the level of its author's "The Edwardians" and "All Passion Spent," as because its parts are so much greater than its whole, and because it so often fails to make the most of its opportunities. The author seems never to have entirely made up her mind what she was doing, or to have changed it in the course of writing. The title itself is an instance of this, for it is safe to guess that no one but the author would have thought of "Family History" as a name for this story of a woman, Evelyn Jarrold. The book begins with family history, certainly; the first of the four parts into which it is divided is called, and appropriately, "Portrait of the Jarrolds." The Jarrolds inevitably suggest the earlier Forsytes, but they have climbed higher and faster; the head of the family, old Mr. Jarrold, was born in obscurity, made a fortune in coal, and becomes Lord Orlestone in the first chapter.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST.

He represents the survival of Victorian confidence and materialism; he identifies himself with the upper class into which he has climbed; he will not admit that the upper class is seriously menaced except by its own weakness, and he has no patience with any talk about the rights of the poor. His children are already going to seed; they live only for pleasure; but they, too, are well satisfied with their lives, wholly materialistic, and confident, or at least careless of the future.

All this is conveyed by accounts of their houses and occupations, with all the skill in isolating a particular society that was shown in "The Edwardians"; all this is excellent in its way; but what has all this to do with Evelyn Jarrold, who monopolizes the last three-quarters of the book? When she emerges from the crowd of Jarrolds, one feels that here is Irene Forsyte, lovely and misunderstood, come back among us; and one looks forward to a story in which this lady shall be something more than a haunting wraith as was Irene, to this story told by a woman. But as it turns out there is no real conflict between Evelyn and her family by marriage; she is in a position of independence and importance, for she has been a widow since the war, and in the course of the book her son succeeds his grandfather as second Lord Orlestone while he is still a schoolboy and under his mother's control; so that materially Evelyn is under no bond to the Jarrolds, and emotionally she cares very little whether she pleases them or not.

Evelyn's story, then, is not going to be what one at first expected. What it is is provided by her love for a man younger than herself, the Hon. Miles Vane-Merrick, a son of the old aristocracy who has taken up socialism. Here one half-expects a conflict between his reforming ideas and the individualism Evelyn has learned of the Jarrolds; but Evelyn is purely a creature of emotion, one set of political ideas means no more than another to her, and the only obstacle this puts between them is that she is jealous of Miles's work because it keeps him from her. What promises to be a much greater obstacle is found in the fact that Evelyn's son Dan has conceived a schoolboy's adoration for Miles; the apparent excuse for Evelyn and Miles to meet is always Dan's friendship for him, and yet, of course, that friendship makes their relationship almost impossible when they become lovers, as they do. There is the possibility of great subtlety, and profound tragedy, in this situation of a woman carrying on an intrigue, under the eyes of her son, with his idolized friend; but Dan turns out to be, from the reader's point of view, quite distressingly comprehending and sympathetic; he refuses to recognize that his dramatic value is that of an obstacle, and asks his mother why she and Miles don't get married. And the reader is inclined to echo, "Yes, why don't you?" There is still, of course, the disparity in their ages, and this is the only part of the story that receives its full treatment. The tragedy of the woman in love with a man younger than herself, with all its pitiful hesitations and desperate sallies, is here splendidly portrayed; one feels the deepest sympathy for Evelyn, and that understanding of a character which is after all one of the greatest gifts an author can give us; but this tragedy is inescapably commonplace compared with the situations which were half-promised us and taken away. One must not overlook the valuable portions of the book, the really exquisite drawing in the portrait of Evelyn, and the contrasted solidity of handling of the Jarrold family. But this is a book to suffer from its very virtues, to seem less good than a worse book, because, though its performance is good, its promise is magnificent, and unfulfilled.

It Happened in Wales

THE HOUSE UNDER THE WATER. By FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG. New York: Harper & Bros. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

IN this new novel Mr. Francis Brett Young is a little off his guard, a little careless: and behind the remote and dreamy appearance of his book you may, I think, discern the author in his true colors. For "The House under the Water" is typical of an ancient and human art—the art of spinning out an insubstantial tale.

To criticize a gifted story-teller is the meanest kind of ingratitude. But consider the chief character in this book. His name —Griffith Tregaron; his appearance—short, red-haired, red-bearded; his nature, lustful and overbearing, with a keen sense of inferiority; his inheritance—Nant Escob, a manor house in some remote Welsh valley. There is something about this kind of man and this kind of circumstance which compels the epithet "stock": we have met them before, and we shall certainly meet them again in one disguise or another.

I do not think that this implies any criticism of Mr. Brett Young, simply because Mr. Brett Young has rarely, even in his most solid novels, excited one's whole admiration for his sense of character. To me, at least, his characters (with the single exception of those in "The Portrait of Clare") have been no more than sufficient, no more than adequate to his other gifts.

But those are gifts which any novelist might envy him. They are two—and you can find both of them at their best in "The House under the Water." First comes a gift for pure narrative, only second to Mr. Somerset Maugham's; second comes a gift for descriptive prose only equalled by Mr. Hugh Walpole among the better-known English novelists, and only exceeded by Mrs. Virginia Woolf. To say that Mr. Brett Young's characters are no more than adequate to the exploitation of these two gifts is merely to say that he is, after all, not a genius.

This story of Tregaron, his Italian wife, his sons and daughters, pursues its felicitous way over something like five hundred pages. One can easily imagine what will happen when a violent man, whose manners and upbringing are foreign, is let loose upon a valley in Wales. He sets everybody by the ears, of course; and his family has a difficult time of it among the local gentry.

This is not a realistic story: indeed, it is very near to a fairy tale from the first sentence onward. Tregaron's three daughters, for instance, do not impress one as being creatures of flesh and blood—not even Philippa, the youngest, charming as she is; but in a world so unreal as the world of Nant Escob they are exactly right; even their love affairs have the logic of a fairy tale. Virginia, the beautiful and proud, does not marry her Esmond, who declares his love for the passionate and homely Diana; while Philippa, who is all youth and innocence, kisses her honest farmer on the last page. All this in a dim setting of meadows drenched in mist, a rock-strewn river, and a dark mountain.

Tregaron himself is not a family man. True to the modern English convention, he has a flair for big business; makes a fortune for himself in the South African gold boom; loses it; and then makes another by selling his whole valley to a Midland city, which needs it badly for a reservoir.

So the curse descends upon Griffith Tregaron. He has sold an estate which has been in Tregaron hands for eight hundred years, and as the floods drown his family acres, so water afterwards destroys the mine into which he has put most of the proceeds from the sale. This, too, has the logic of a fairy tale.

Indeed, "The House under the Water" reads very like Mr. Brett Young on a holiday. He had a good time writing it, and we have a good time reading it; it is a book one can recommend to every kind of taste. It wears the dress of great fiction, with assurance and without effrontery—even though "great" is not a word which we can apply to its author. For Brett Young has gifts, but no vestige of genius. He has never attempted innovation, he has never shocked, he has never astonished; and he has never failed to please. To this gift for rightly satisfying his readers the modern

FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG.

English novel is genuinely indebted: and if he is remembered in literary histories of the future (as seems likely) it will be because he keeps the faith—because he preserves a good tradition in a difficult time.

The London *Times* reports that an experiment in printing was recently announced by Harrison of Paris in the shape of "A Typographical Commonplace-Book," with selections from the literature of different ages printed in certain European type-faces which have rarely been seen by readers. The object of the designer, Monroe Wheeler, has been to exploit the possibilities of types which, though for the most part unsuitable for bookwork, may still, in a paragraph or two, serve to stimulate one's sense of beauty in printing.

A Feminine Triptych

WOMEN AGAINST MEN. By STORM JAMESON. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

A NICELY contrasted feminine triptych is exhibited in Miss Jameson's new book. As her rather combative title implies, the heroines of the three long stories which make up "Women Against Men" are arrayed against a masculine world, which according to the author dominates without much trouble their lives and actions, no matter what their social standing or mental equipment may be. Yet, while admitting that Miss Jameson's case histories are well chosen and in the main admirably told, it seems obvious that most readers will consider this an arbitrary and unproven, —not to say unprovable,—thesis, and will prefer to read her book as pure narrative, without attempting to connect the three stories by any such unnecessary links.

The first, in fact, while presenting the portrait of a successful lady sex-novelist, who turns her affairs into royalties with a rapidity and ease only observable in fiction, has little to do with men, since it is Victoria Form's relationship to the autobiographical narrator which lends point to the whole. Less artificial is "A Single Heart," the straightforward history of a Laborite M. P. and his almost too long-suffering wife. Miss Jameson is triumphantly successful in the difficult task of making the reader believe that Emily's devotion, which has nothing to do with Evan's faithfulness, is nevertheless explicable. Undoubtedly the best of the three, this touching story will be found worthy to rank with the author's most characteristic work, such as the trilogy of Mary Hervey.

Third in the assortment is "A Day Off," a bitter and excessively veristic study of a prostitute on the decline. This sort of thing has been done so often and so well in recent years that only Miss Jameson's accuracy in minute observation of details and shades of feeling makes it unusual. Still, its acid tone serves as contrast to the over refined atmosphere of "Delicate Monster" and the lush sentiment of "A Single Heart," while the introduction of a mildly Joycean technique in dealing with the chief character's thoughts shows that the author is well able to adapt herself to new manners and methods. The entire book serves to demonstrate Miss Jameson's great capabilities anew.

Popularizers

(*Continued from page* 349)

For these popularizers take upon themselves a serious responsibility. Enthusiasm is not enough, readability is not enough (it may be a menace), vigor and gusto and independence are not enough. The facts about Dante or Milton or Chaucer are dead in themselves, but Dante and Milton and Chaucer without the facts are mere subjective creations of the author, not more valuable, not more related to the literature of the past than characters in a novel. We praise, we applaud men who wish to make old books live again, but they cannot be allowed to get away with murder. They cannot build theories upon misunderstandings, make generalizations out of ignorance, attack what never existed, defend what was never meant, and use our past and its monuments as a moving-picture director rearranges history to fit his desired effects. If the scholars refuse to regard the public interest in their researches, and so go on with no aim but accumulation, at least their work has a potential usefulness—it offends only those who think that correlation has become more important than specialization, that utility for life is more important than utility as fact. But such rash statements, misconceptions, and plain mistakes as are noted in the *Review* this week are dangerous in exact proportion to the persuasiveness of the books that contain them. Enthusiasts for or against Aeschylus, Milton, Shakespeare, and even Beowulf, must know what they are talking about; nor be allowed to plead that if their errors are illegitimate they are only little ones. A tiny ignorance can make a glittering structure of opinion as frail as glass.

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THE PEACE CONFERENCE AT VERSAILLES.

The Super—House

THE STRANGEST FRIENDSHIP IN HISTORY. By GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK. New York: Horace Liveright. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by FRANK H. SIMONDS

GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK, who was editor of *The Fatherland* and the ablest and most ardent of the champions of the German cause in America while the United States was neutral, has in recent years been exploring the relations of Woodrow Wilson and Colonel Edward M. House. Mr. Viereck has been, naturally, chiefly interested in the historical consequences of this famous friendship. But the drama has not escaped him and he has made his narrative something of a real "thriller."

In the main the facts as Mr. Viereck presents them are well known. Unnecessarily and a bit cruelly the Wilsonians, since the President broke and disappeared from public life, have sought to minimize the role of House and to dismiss him as a sort of a glorified messenger and, in the end, an inadequate agent. When the "Intimate Papers" were published, it was manifest that the Colonel resented the treatment, which was unfair, and the estimates of his role, which were inexact. What had happened to the Colonel was, nevertheless, what inevitably happens to any man who assumes the relation to a great figure that House did to Wilson. Inescapably the historical figure absorbs in his legend everything about him. The actions which he takes upon advice, the wittiest things said by others, in the end go to swell his balance.

The friends of greatness have to take their profit on the wing. And that profit is considerable. For House it was the translation into the midst of events in one of the great moments of history. He literally walked with kings and talked with famous men of the war period. He spoke for Wilson but in his own voice. He made friends everywhere and retained them afterwards. He was shrewd, clear-sighted, an admirable ambassador. He was, in addition a clever political adviser. Wilson owed him a lot and for long gave him his confidence unreservedly.

In the end the partnership, such as it was, lapsed as all such associations do and must. The immediate occasion remains a mystery. But only because the world insists upon a dramatic and tragic end to its dramas. Colonel House thinking it over in the long quiet years after the disaster sets it down to human jealousies of other associates of Mr. Wilson. Mr. Viereck with more frankness than chivalry ascribes the responsibility to Mrs. Wilson assisted by Admiral Grayson, the wife and the physician.

In point of fact, however, the explanation is of little real importance. Colonel House is not a historical figure, neither he nor any later commentator can separate Woodrow Wilson into component fractions and label them House, Cobb, etc. The whole of Wilson is so much greater than the sum of these parts that the parts are unimportant. The single value Colonel House might have now is as a witness, as an observer who saw the great play through and from the inside.

Unhappily for very human reasons this role of the expert witness is beyond Colonel House. And that is why the last part of Mr. Viereck's very interesting book breaks down. For it is founded upon the comments of Colonel House almost entirely, the comments of the friend of the President made years after the events and made also after years have begun to play tricks with his memory. Thus in Mr. Viereck's narrative it is clear that Colonel House believes that he could have saved the President, the Fourteen Points, the Paris Conference, if only unseen forces and invisible influences had not intervened to separate him from Wilson.

The trouble is that in this retrospective appraisal, Colonel House's memory plays him odd tricks. Thus in the latter part of Mr. Viereck's story, he quotes Colonel House as saying—"I do not wish to criticize Wilson . . . but I would have made a different peace. I would have tried to resuscitate the Fourteen Points in the Peace Conference as I did in the Armistice Conference." Now no one who ever knew Colonel House will doubt that when he said this be believed it. That is how it looks to him now. But the trouble is that it is inexact. Let me cite a personal example:

During the Peace Conference, while Wilson was still on the ocean returning from America, I went to see Colonel House at the Crillon to ask him about the question of the Rhineland. He had been ill, he was lying on the *chaise longue* which is also part of the furniture of history and he said to me at once:

> "It's all settled, I have just seen the old man (Clemenceau) and told him our view. There will be a Rhenish Free State possibly inside French customs frontiers."
>
> "And the Sarre Basin?" I asked.
>
> "France will get that and she ought to have it. I was glad to tell the old man and he was pleased."
>
> "Has the President agreed?" I inquired.
>
> "Not yet," answered the Colonel. "He doesn't know about it yet but he will agree. You see, Simonds, I know him so well I can always tell in advance how his mind is going to react. This is the right solution and the President will accept it."

So I went away and wrote a despatch that with American consent France would annex the Sarre Basin, and there would be a Rhenish State, and it was published in the London *Times* with a map. And the despatch is there in the files of the *Times* to support the statement. But you see how far the fact is from the Colonel's recollection of it now.

Colonel House was the wisest adviser Wilson ever had in American politics. His estimates of men and circumstances was invaluable in the neutrality period. He was, too, loyal to Wilson to an extent beyond exaggeration and without a touch of self-seeking in it. But he was not a man of principles, on the contrary he was a born diplomat, which means, in simple terms, he was an inspired trader. He knew men through politics. Mr. Viereck's narrative is full of proof of this fact.

At Paris he strove manfully to make the best bargain he could for the Wilson program, but, as he told Wilson before the President set sail for America in February, compromises must be expected. "Better a bad treaty in April than the same treaty in June," he said later. The real House at Paris was the trader, he was not disloyal to Wilson, he always did the best he could for the principles. But he was a practical man. But while House was an admirable minister he was a poor missionary. The Fourteen Points were for him a party platform, not the foundation of a new faith.

At Paris Wilson more and more passed under the spell of a messiah complex. He felt himself the representative of all people against their reactionary and unrepresentative rulers. He spoke as a prophet, not as a statesman. But House had to deal with the statesmen, he had to work, particularly while Wilson was away, with the practical questions of frontiers and provinces and colonies. When he tried to do this Wilson's friends, who accepted the President as a prophet, convinced him House was false to the principles, to the faith that was to make all men free.

And so House fell. He was treated unfairly, he was criticized unjustly. But on the other hand, his recollection now that it was Wilson who made the compromises is totally inexact. House's strength with Clemenceau, with Balfour, his appeal for Wickham Steed, whose praise cost him dear, was that he was a practical man. Left to work out the problem, House would not have gotten a better treaty, that was beyond human capacity at Paris in 1919, but he would have achieved results more quickly and infinitely more quietly.

"Skipper Wilson," says Mr. Viereck, threw overboard almost every one of his Fourteen Points save his League of Nations. The Germans learned they had built their hopes "on fourteen scraps of paper." But surely Mr. Viereck recognizes that Mr. Wilson did not throw over the "point" assured to the sea. And is it not Wilson's failure to treat this "point" as a scrap of paper which constitutes today the basic indictment of the Treaty of Versailles from the German viewpoint?

The trouble with Mr. Viereck's narrative, as it deals with the making of peace, with Colonel House's recollections, with almost all that is now written about the Paris Peace Conference, is that the legend has already become so big and so firmly fixed that unconsciously all conform to it. In point of fact Wilson did not throw overboard most of his Fourteen Points and the chaos in the post-war world has resulted at least as much from the portion of his cargo that he saved as because of the sacrifice of the balance.

The historians will take their fill of Mr. Viereck, but aside from the question of facts and dates he has told a dramatic story in a fashion that challenges attention.

Discovering Deception

LYING AND ITS DETECTION. By JOHN A. LARSON. In collaboration with GEORGE W. HANEY and LEONARDE KEELER. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1932. $5.

Reviewed by CHESTER W. DARROW

Behavior Research Fund, Chicago

THE extravagant claims and popular misconceptions which have been extant regarding the Lie Detector have created a need for a book such as Dr. Larson's. As a former policeman, one of the first to work extensively with deception tests for actual criminals, a doctor of philosophy in physiology, a physician specializing in psychiatry, and as assistant criminologist of the State of Illinois, he is eminently trained to speak on the subject. The application of physiological methods to the detection of deception has probably suffered most at the hands of its friends. Rash assertions as to its infallibility, attempts to apply it without adequate control, attempts to use it as evidence in court, and disregard of the "fear of the innocent" have brought the method considerable disrepute. Against such prostitutions of the method Dr. Larson wages effective warfare. On the other hand, the arm chair criticism and the academic cavil by experimenters with artificial laboratory deception stunts that didn't work, are met by concrete evidence from police investigations.

The first part of the volume constitutes more or less a source book compiled from the literature relating to terminology, juvenile lying, pathological conditions, malingering, sex, and cultural differences. There is a review of "ancient and modern forensic methods for the detection of the innocence or guilt of the suspect." Methods of trial by combat, ordeal, and torture that have been in vogue in many ages in many countries are briefly and interestingly detailed, a fitting introduction to the "third degree." A sufficient number of choice and horrible examples of the latter method amply prepare the reader for the possible mitigation offered by the Lie Detector.

Although Dr. Larson was mainly instrumental in the development of apparatus and technic for application in criminal cases, he does not claim to be the "inventor of the Lie Detector." Credit goes to those early workers with various aspects of the technic, Lombroso, Benussi, Burtt, Erlanger, Jung, and Marston. To a more recent modification of the apparatus by Mr. Keeler credit is likewise given.

The later portion of the book is a review of case material along with reproductions of many different kinds of records—it is a chapter of true detective stories. Dr. Larson has presented evidence of the value of a technic for differentiation of certain physiological reactions during deception in actual criminal cases. While its reliability is difficult to determine due to the nature of the material, sufficient evidence is at hand from cases that have been "cleared" to establish a rather high reliability. The method, Dr. Larson insists, is not infallible. It should not be used as evidence in court. Its chief function should be to assist in the examination of the suspects because of its very frequently demonstrated value in eliminating the innocent and in obtaining a confession from the guilty.

The Saturday Review Recommends

This Group of Recent Books:

BARABBAS. By SARA BARD FIELD. *Boni.*
A long dramatic poem in which Barabbas appears as an idealist.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM BECKFORD. By J. W. OLIVER. *Oxford University Press.*
The biography of one of the most fantastic personalities of real life.

AMID THESE STORMS. By WINSTON CHURCHILL. *Scribners.*
Animated essays on diverse experiences by an astute observer.

This Less Recent Book:

A MIND THAT FOUND ITSELF. By CLIFFORD WHITTINGHAM BEERS. *Doubleday, Doran.*
The autobiography of a mind.

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Mr. Garland's Log

MY FRIENDLY CONTEMPORARIES. A LITERARY LOG. By HAMLIN GARLAND. Decorations by CONSTANCE GARLAND. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

IF I could keep only two of Hamlin Garland's books, I should take "Rose of Dutcher's Coolly" (1895) and "A Son of the Middle Border" (1917).

In the former Mr. Garland was a pioneer of modern realism in America; there were freshness and frankness then amounting to audacity. No historian of American literature can afford to neglect this novel. I agree with Carl Van Doren, whose chapter on Hamlin Garland in his "Contemporary American Novelists" (1922) is the most penetrating criticism I have read on the subject, that Mr. Garland made an error when he forsook realism for romanticism in his treatment of the West.

He may easily be forgiven for this when we remember the tidal wave of romance that swept over English and American literature in 1900. I could name a list of a dozen best-sellers, glittering with bogus ornamentation. Best-sellers smell of mortality; the one exception in that period is Owen Wister's "The Virginian" which has sufficient reality and vitality to keep its popularity today after thirty years.

That Hamlin Garland had not lost his clear sense of the fact became evident when in 1917 he produced "A Son of the Middle Border," a permanent contribution to American literature. It will be read not only by historical students but for its own sake. It is a trustworthy record and an achievement in literary art.

No one then familiar with Mr. Garland's early radical ideas would have predicted that he would eventually write the present series of literary autobiographies. Youth is naturally radical and old age conservative, not because of the difference between few and many years, but rather because of the difference between freedom and responsibility.

"My Friendly Contemporaries" is mellow and mild. I find it interesting, because I enjoy good anecdotes of men of letters. The only thing I object to is the atmosphere of decay; it seems almost as if he must have written this work in the habit of Schiller, in a room pungent with the odor of aged apples. Why should one repine at the sight of grey hair in others or at the realization of the burden of years in oneself? It is something to inspire pride rather than shame. Of all false sentiments, none is so false as the apologetic attitude of many old men. They should be happy and proud of having lived so long.

Apart from this atmosphere of mouldering decrepitude, which in no way fits the personal appearance of Hamlin Garland, I recommend the book to all those who can remember the persons it describes.

Among men of action the hero is Roosevelt; interesting anecdotes are given, revealing his tremendous vitality and his splendid recklessness in general conversation. Among men of letters the hero is Howells; and it is too early to predict his final place in American literature. Those who dismiss him contemptuously today may never have read "A Modern Instance," "The Rise of Silas Lapham," "Indian Summer," "A Hazard of New Fortunes." In comparison with Ernest Hemingway, these seem like weak tea; but Howells wrote the truth, and was more interested in processes of thought than in physical sensation. It is quite possible that some day he may enjoy a "revival."

The chapters at the end of the book (reprinted from a previous work) dealing with Barrie, Shaw, and other famous English contemporaries, are full of interest. Here Mr. Garland shows his capacity for high-class reporting.

There is not as much mirth and humor in this autobiography as one might reasonably expect, but all through the book his own kindly, sympathetic, generous nature gives a glow of geniality; and I hope in the next volume he will take old age for granted and not mention it so often.

The BOWLING GREEN

Translations from the Chinese

(Several of these are reprinted from earlier issues, by request)

GOTHAM GOLD STRIPE

IN every Fifth Avenue bus
The left hind seat on the upper deck
Carries an advertisement
Of ladies' stockings

That seems to me
The shrewdest psychic bid in New York
For just there, at the head of those curving steps
Everyone, both male and female,
Is most stocking conscious.

ON THE NOSE

When the Old Mandarin first came to broadcast
On our Ginger Cubes program
(Said the Account Executive)
He was unfamiliar with the sign language.
He was nervous, and as I watched him
Through the glass window of the Control Room
To allay his anxiety
I touched my finger to my nose,
Which means, the time allowance is O. K.

Always precise in his deportment
He thought I was warning him
Something was amiss:
He seized his silk handkerchief
And blew so violently
That every kilocycle reverberated
From here to Seattle.

HIS FRIEND THE COP

Only 3 bucks, O. M.?
How come *Golden Wedding* for 3 bucks?

The traffic cop is my buddy,
Replied the Old Mandarin.
He went with me to the speakeasy
And said, Listen Charley,
Give the old man a pint
For the same price you charge me.

SINUS TROUBLE

I've got Sinus Trouble
Said the Old Mandarin
Admiring shapely Poo Pitty Sing.
She thought he meant
A pain in his head,
But the literal old etymologer
Was remembering the true meaning of *sinus*—
A curve.

READING ALOUD

There's a game of Reading Aloud
Enjoyed by experts:
You read out passages from a novelist
With whose style the listeners are familiar
And attempt to interpolate
Mischievous improvisations of your own
But approximating the author's manner.
The sport is to see whether your audience
Can detect your insertions of fraud.
To an ear alert for trickery
Many genuine passages of text
Will fall under suspicion.

This is a game much enjoyed
By Old Nick himself
Who can read us the text of the Author
With such cunning insinuations of sophistry
That we don't know what's what.

NO ADMISSION

M. Vinrouge, the homesick wine merchant from Beaune
Heard of a French speakeasy in New York
Which specialized in Burgundian cuisine.
He tried to get in and was refused at the door
And the more he talked French
The more they were convinced
He was some specially subtle
Revenue Agent.

LOST CAUSES

The old Grolier Club building on 32nd Street
Once a literary shrine
And resort of famous bibliophiles
Is now the office of *United Women's Wear*
And the *Waist, Belt, Petticoat and Underwear League.*

It was always a home of Lost Causes.

A QUESTION

But how, asked the Inquiring Child
When told she must accept Holy Writ in toto,
How did they get the Exact Words
To put in the Bible?

SHOW WINDOW

The smartest show-window in New York
Is that little tiny one like a jewel-casket
On Fifth Avenue near 54th
Where M. Pinet used to exhibit
One jewelled pair of evening slippers.
It is set low in the wall
To detain the eyes of roving ladies.

Now it's FOR RENT. Oh Renting Agent
(Clark T. Chambers of Madison Avenue)
How I would like to see displayed there
Glowing in their own indirect light
The elegant feet of one perfect poem.

STOP, LOOK, LISTEN

Mental grade crossings, said the Old Mandarin
Should be abolished.
It is intolerable
That in passing through another man's mind
There is the horrid peril
Of being run down by a thundering prejudice.

ROTATION OF CROPS

Yes, said a visiting Mandarin,
There never was a family
That made such use of their literary resources.
They got hold of BLANK
(Mentioning a famous poet
About whom that family had written innumerable books)
They smoked him, they chewed him,
And they used the ashes for snuff.

VOICES IN THE DARK

There are echoes and shoutings in the dark of the mind
As menacing, reiterative, calamitous-sounding,
As Extras indistinguishably bawled
In uptown streets at night.

And then the next morning
You learn they meant nothing.

WEAKNESS

If you approach me
I shall cheerfully promise
More than I can perform:
For I have my frailties:

But withinward, my soul
Evades, eludes, recedes;
You must not be peevish—
I have my own secrets to pursue.
And so have you.

SHIRT TAILS

Asked for a comment on American civilization,
The Old Mandarin replied:

Your shirt-tails are not long enough.
A certain breeziness about the reins
May be all right for wenches,
But well girded and roomed about
With the kilts of his shirt-tail
The philosopher feels more secure.

GRINDING TEETH

Nothing in the life of Lord Byron
Pleases me so much as the fact that his dentist
Said he was damaging his teeth
By grinding them in his sleep,
And I think how many Literary Critics
Are probably doing the same thing
This very night.

IN THE PEOPLE'S GAS BUILDING

"You're thinner, aren't you?" said Sid Avery,
The delightful bookseller.
"Yes," he replied, "I am thinner.
I've been thinking."
"No," said Sid, fixing the old babbler with a crystalline eye,
"No, you haven't been thinking.
You've been wondering."
And there was loud applause.

THOUGHTS IN A GARAGE

Now, said the motorist,
Adjusting the shutter,
I've put on her winter front
To keep her heart warm in the long long nights,
And a little alcohol
In her radiator.

THE WELL-HEAD

Outside the antique shop on 47th Street
There's an old stone well-head
And whenever I pass it
I imagine a scene for the movies—
Charley Chaplin hiding inside it
While indignant pursuit
Goes clamoring by.
In the well-head of these poems
I also hide myself
Where the policemen of literature
Are not likely to look.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Art

THE WORLD OF JEAN DE BOSSCHÈRE. By SAMUEL PUTNAM. London: Fortune Press. 1932.

While it is a little difficult to see why Mr. Samuel Putnam should devote an elaborate volume of some 150 pages to the work of Jean de Bosschère, there can be little doubt that he has done the job thoroughly and with sufficient enthusiasm. The illustrations which M. de Bosschère provided for limited editions of "The Golden Asse," "The Temptation of St. Anthony," the "Contes Drolatiques," and his own "The Closed Door," are well known here and in England. As an author, his *symboliste* poems and obscure novels have found a smaller if no less devoted following,—in fact it may be hazarded that he is better known to the English speaking world than to the French.

Mr. Putnam's lengthy analysis of his double life as artist and author shows that M. de Bosschère's talent is singularly independent and original in both fields, drawing largely upon the mysticism of his native Flanders for inspiration, disdaining the shifting trends of modern artistic fashions. Miss May Sinclair has summed up the weird and macabre qualities of his work in her introduction to "The Closed Door" far more effectively and in far fewer words than Mr. Putnam. Consequently his book may be regarded as a labor of love rather than a great contribution to the public's knowledge of a personage hardly of the first class in himself. As such it is admirable, and since it contains a number of the artist's previously unpublished drawings as well, the Bosschère collectors should have it.

SEX IN THE ARTS, a Modern Symposium. Arranged by J. F. MCDERMOTT and KENDALL B. TAFT. Harpers. 1932. $3.

While its eighteen essays by as many authors present now and then something that is brilliant and much that is judicious, this book as a whole is pretty dreary reading. This was in the nature of the case. The subject, as defined in one way or another, is either too broad or too narrow. In either case much overlapping and repetition was inevitable.

The implications of sex in manners and morals are far flung. At no time have the arts hesitated to treat these implications fully. Nothing emerges from this symposium to show that modern art has discovered any new significances in sex. Indeed very few of the authors make the claim. What has been gained, if gain it be, is merely a greater openness in treating what is relatively insignificant in sex, some more or less unprecedented exploration of abnormal sex experience, the intrusion of the vocabulary of latrinal epigraphy into literature, the exposure of nudity in the scenic arts. Out of all this little if any esthetic enrichment has come.

In the biological art of sex there is little stuff for the arts. Paraphrasing one of the contributors to this volume—for the purposes of art the act of sex is no more interesting in itself than that of digestion. What has really come about is merely an egregious over-advertising of the sexual act and its physical concomitants. This is the sound judgment of most of the contributors of this volume.

The upshot of the discussion seems to be that while the lifting of our traditional reticence, or, if you will prudery—has had social and moral advantages, the artistic advantages are difficult to make out. Broadly speaking the arts always seem to have had all the liberty in this regard that was really good for them.

So the book leaves rather a negative impression, albeit much good criticism emerges incidentally. Under these circumstances a reviewer can only enumerate the essays that have especially interested him. Modern Biography, by Ernest Boyd; The Motion Picture, by Struthers Burt; Modern Music, by Paul Rosenfeld; Man, Woman and the Creative Spirit, by Robert Briffault; The Presentative Arts, by Max F. Meyer; The Meaning of Clothes, by Herbert Sanborn.

Finally it is the part of simple friendliness to warn the incautious and enthusiastic amateur of *curiosa* that when he buys this volume he buys sober and quasi-scientific discussion and not what is ordinarily known as a "sex book." No habitual reader of such will lick his chops over it.

If *your Christmas gifts didn't include*

SHERMAN

FIGHTING PROPHET

by Lloyd Lewis

Here is just a reminder that you'll want to get it and read it some day. Without a dissenting voice, critics from the north, east, west —and south — concur in naming it the big biography of 1932.

Fanny Butcher in the Chicago *Tribune* writes: "Unquestionably one of the great American biographies is offered to the world in *Sherman; Fighting Prophet* . . . It is the perfect marriage between subject matter and manner that makes Mr. Lewis' volume the monument it is both to the author and to his subject. "*Sherman*" is the kind of book that gives most reviewers complete satisfaction because they cannot imagine that particular job conceivably being better done."

$3.50

HARCOURT, BRACE & CO.
383 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK

Fiction

A BOWL OF CHERRIES. By *John Held, Jr.* Vanguard. $2.

I WAS THE MAN. By *Pamela Frankau.* Sears. $2.

GRAND SLAM. By *B. Russell Herts.* New York: Pratt. $2.

THE GLASS LADY. By *Asa Bordages.* New York: Godwin. $2.

TALES OF TRESPASS. By *Sir George Young.* Oxford University Press. $1.75.

POWER. By *Lion Feuchtwanger.* Modern Library. 95 cents.

THREE SOLDIERS. By *John Dos Passos.* Modern Library. 95 cents.

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF PIERRE LOUYS. Liveright.

THE ABIDING OF UMÉ. By *Edith A. Sawyer.* New York: John Lowell Pratt. $2.

A LADY WHO LOST. By *Alice Beal Parsons.* Gotham House. $2.50.

BEAUTY. By *Faith Baldwin.* Farrar & Rinehart. $2 net.

THE GREAT ABDUCTION. By *Arthur Somers Roche.* Sears. $1.

KILLERS' RANGE. By *E. B. Mann.* Morrow. $2.

PETER IBBETSON. By *George du Maurier.* Modern Library. 95 cents.

YOUNG AND FAIR. By *Laetitia McDonald.* Farrar & Rinehart. $2 net.

DESIRABLE YOUNG MEN. By *Patrick Carleton.* Dutton. $2.50.

Miscellaneous

PERSONALITY, MANY IN ONE. By *James Winfield Bridges.* Stratford. $2.

MOTIF-INDEX OF FOLK-LITERATURE. By *Stith Thompson.* Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Library.

MODERN COMMUNICATION. Houghton Mifflin. $2.75.

THE RHYTHM OF LIFE. By *Francis G. Peabody.* Houghton Mifflin. $1.

THE YEARBOOK OF COLLEGE ORATORY. Vol. IV. Compiled and edited by *Evan E. Anderson.* New York: Noble & Noble.

THE MORTGAGE BOND RACKET. By *Ernest Allan Barbeau.* Philadelphia: Roland Swain. $1.25.

INTERCOLLEGIATE DEBATES. Edited by *Egbert Ray Nichols.* New York: Noble & Noble.

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER c/o *The Saturday Review.* As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

ADVICE has been rolling in from readers. Three spirited recommendations, from Pennsylvania, the Catskills, and Washington, D. C., come for "The Shiny Night," by Beatrice Tunstall (Doubleday, Doran), for the reader in Africa who wanted more novels like Mary Webb's "Precious Bane." One called it by far the finest novel about this section of England; another speaks of its quiet beauty and charm, and all three mourn that it had no Stanley Baldwin to discover it and start the general public that way. Also *J. F. M., London, England,* writes that if anyone asks in like manner for novels of Scottish life, I should tell them of "Kelston of Kells" and "The Sons of the Forge," by H. M. Anderson, the latter just published (Blackwood). He says they have the Scott quality. *B. W. D., Trevlac, Indiana,* who is a food manufacturer as well as a writer, sent straightway for "Good Things to Eat in England" and asks in return if I have seen a delightful and excellent new cook book by Irma Rombauer, "The Joy of Cooking." "It seems to be privately printed by the A. C. Clayton Printing Co., St. Louis. It is so unusual I thought you might like it. I do not know author or printer so this is not a plug; I like to pass along good things that come my way." *Edith O'Shaughnessy,* author of the unforgettable novel of post-war conditions, "Vienna Medley," and of the recently published biography, "Marie Adelaide, Grand Duchess of Luxemburg" (Smith & Haas), a popular selection of the Catholic Book Club, writes from *Rome, Italy,* to add to the Goethe suggestions some older books: "I would like to suggest the still unsurpassed 'Life of Goethe' by George Henry Lewes (1863), now published in Everyman's Library with a preface by Havelock Ellis; there is also in the second edition of Carlyle's translation of 'Wilhelm Meister'—which translation introduced Goethe to the English public—the long and brilliant preface which covers much and very solid ground for Goethe lovers. In this centenary year there is the 'Life and Works of Goethe,' by J. G. Robertson, Professor of German Literature at London University. This has not the intellectual vivacity of Lewes's book, but contains much important information collected since its appearance. Mr. Nevinson's 'Goethe' I have not seen. Emil Ludwig's 'Goethe' is his usual very skilful piece of carpentry, but lacks color and above all dimension. These few suggestions may be of use to a young generation of potential Goethe lovers." They come just in time for *A. W. D., Jersey City,* who asks for such an introduction. *R. D. K., of the University of Pennsylvania Press,* says "Your mention of Dr. Woolley's popular books on Ur of the Chaldees prompts me to inquire if you know that the official records of these excavations are published by us. While they are technical publications I believe anyone interested in archæology would be glad to know about them. The *Museum Journal* of the University Museum contains current reports from Ur in almost every number; it is a quarterly, $4 a year. For your own benefit, a trip to the University Museum might prove just as exciting as your experience in the British Museum. The excavations at Ur are being conducted by a joint expedition and the spoils have been equally divided. The unbelievably beautiful jewelry from the royal tombs, the spirited statues of bulls, the friezes and columns from temples, are all on display." And there I have been going to Philadelphia every other week all this time and didn't know it. And *K. E. Read, Bryn Mawr, Pa.,* reminds me that "Best English Detective Stories of 1828," edited by Ronald Knox and E. Harrington (Liveright), must be the book for which *A. S. G., Boston,* was looking, for it does have an introduction by Father Knox. My very poor excuse must be that I read this admirable work in England in 1929 and didn't know it was published here.

A. B. W., Fayetteville, Tenn., requests information on the principles of biography. Please tell A. B. W. not to miss reading "The Development of English Biography," by Harold Nicolson (Harcourt, Brace). It is one of those fine volumes that the "Hogarth Lectures on Literature" comprises. I hope he will not forget—I presume it will be unnecessary to mention it, but I do so in order to make sure that it is not overlooked as it many times is—to read the article on biography in the Encyclopædia Britannica, 14th Edition, by Sir Edmund Gosse, George Sampson, and Dorothy Ann Dondore. It is informative, comprehensive, and succinct.

I have still another chance to be happy because I can return a little favor to I. R. from Seligman, Arizona, who wants a star book and a flower-guide. "A Beginner's Star-Book," by Kelvin McKready (Putnam), revised and brought up to date, is the finest thing I have ever found of its kind. I have used it with a flashlight for years. It has the black maps with the stars indicated on it for about every fifteen days throughout the year, and on the opposite page the white map indicating the constellations. It, like the "Field Book of the Skies," that you mentioned, can be used with field glasses, small telescope, or the naked eye. And for a flower-guide, I. R. should be sure to get "Field Book of Western Wild Flowers," by Margaret Armstrong in collaboration with J. J. Thornber (Putnam). Professor Thornber is botanist for the University of Arizona and the Arizona Agricultural Experiment Station. The book has 500 illustrations in black and white and forty-eight plates in color drawn from nature by the author. What could be finer for an Arizona inquirer?

The Yale University Library recently opened a collection of Goetheana selected from the Yale William A. Speck collection. Groups have been arranged dealing with Goethe in science, publications dedicated to the poet, important and rare periodicals of the Goethe period, the Werther collection, Faust, Weimar, Goethe's influence in the United States and England, medals struck in his honor, and pictures.

Memo for 1933

For
Daily Reading
during
the New Year
so soon to burst upon us
we suggest—

The Anatomy
of Bibliomania
by
Holbrook Jackson

now available in one volume of 850 pages, for $7.50. A veritable breviary for booklmen and women everywhere and, by the same author—

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a side-track of the same subject which leads the reader to rich mines of curious and delightful knowledge. $7.50

"A natural and indeed necessary corollary to Mr. Jacksons monumental synthesis and triumphal garland of the love of books in all its forms and expressions"
—Richard Le Gallienne in the N.Y. Times

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York

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This Will Never Do

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: I have been so struck by the great significance of Mr. Rascoe's "Titans of Literature" that although I cannot claim to have more than an amateur's acquaintance with any part of his vast subject except the chapters on Greek and Latin, and must, therefore, confine myself to these alone, nevertheless I am venturing to call your attention to the real reason for the importance of his book, which so far the critics seem not to have commented upon.

It is no less than a triumph of democracy so signal, it may well prove to be the culmination of our ideal. For democracy, of course, rests upon the belief in the average man as against the expert. This is the chief article in our creed. Every trial by jury is an exemplification of our faith in ordinary men. So, too, we choose our rulers: we, the untrained, choose the untrained to decide for us economic questions which are to determine prosperity or misery for us all. We have an instinctive distrust for the far-sought conclusions of the expert, and an unshakable confidence in the immediate good sense of men just like ourselves.

These are, of course, the mere commonplaces of democracy. It has remained for Mr. Rascoe to carry us a step further, a step so great as to minimize all previous advances. He has stormed the ancient, undemocratic, privileged citadel of the scholar and the critic and has handed it over to democracy triumphant. The common sense conclusions of the men who wield the power in jury box and voting booth are now the court of appeal before which scholar and critic stand discredited.

A poor, shabby lot they are as Mr. Rascoe shows them up, "humbugs," by and large, and "pettifogging obscurantists," all in a conspiracy to trick the world into believing that they have in their learning a unique possession which the rest of us cannot share—a completely undemocratic pretension, amounting indeed to no less than a claim to special privileges.

But Mr. Rascoe in a few pages completely demolishes it. To begin with, so he assures us, the scholars really are not learned, and even if they were their erudition would not help them in criticizing Greek and Latin books. "Scholastic discussion is a pleasant little game for scholars to play among themselves, but not to be confused with history"—which, apparently, is a superior subject mere scholars have nothing to do with.

What then are we to substitute for scholarship? Mr. Rascoe answers in no uncertain terms—there is nothing about which Mr. Rascoe is ever uncertain. Common sense, unimpaired by special knowledge, in its state of nature, pure and undefiled. Practical good sense can free men from the necessity of toiling over Greek and Latin texts: "To say that the origin of Greek dramas like the 'Medea' was in dithyrambic songs and dances sounds as absurd to me as to say the origin of 'Man and Superman' was the cancan." And so dismiss the dithyramb. Why bother about a thing that sounds absurd? Or again: "Most modern scholars scoff at this account, but I see no reason for not accepting it as being probably in essentials, true." These are the intuitive convictions arrived at by the unhampered use of sturdy common sense. It is the perfect method for a busy democracy. Both swift acquisition and unquestioning conviction are assured by it. So Mr. Rascoe is enabled to get in very rapid work. Along with the dithyramb, he disposes summarily of the heretofore unanimous belief that Greek tragedy has a religious element. "It is the very reverse of religious." Then the way the Greek alphabet is pronounced is declared to be a monument to the scholars' prejudices and the right way is indicated—all in a paragraph. In a few words he solves the Homeric question, "which has somehow unaccountably puzzled and confused Greek scholars," and the anthropologists are succinctly corrected in their ideas how hero worship and religious cults arise. The economists he does not trouble to refute in detail. They are all so wrong about the Trojan War that with a simple "Bosh to them" he turns his back upon them. It is the Declaration of Independence restated: All men are born free and equal and every man is to be his own scholar.

Not only is the scholarly method thus proved completely fallacious, but the scholars are shown to be false pretenders, ignorant of the very Greek and Latin books they have claimed to spend their lives studying. Professor Zimmern, for instance. He is supposed to be an authority on how the Greeks lived, but he does not even know what the Greeks themselves said their houses were like. The reason for his errors, Mr. Rascoe points out, is that he does not know Homer. If he will just read the "Iliad," he can learn as much on this point as Mr. Rascoe himself knows. Professor Murray's case, however, is a good deal worse. Indeed of all the scholastic breed he is the most conspicuously wrong. To be sure in one point Mr. Rascoe discusses, "he is not unique in this error; all the other commentators I have read share it," but that fact does not help him with Mr. Rascoe. "Such scholars have got the cart before the horse," he explains—a procedure perfectly in keeping with their general muddlement. Mr. Rascoe gives what help he can. He advises Professor Murray to read more Greek, at any rate as much as Mr. Rascoe has been able to achieve—along with all of literature up to our present time. "If Professor Murray had read Hippocrates" he would have understood the real force of a—supposedly—familiar Greek suffix just as well as Mr. Rascoe does. And if he had put a little more thought into his lifelong study of Euripides, "he would understand these plays. He would realize that Euripides was a very daring innovator in dramatic technique, language, and point of view." This is as scathing an indictment of scholarly ineptitude as could be made, for it convicts Professor Murray of the darkest scholastic crime, impenetrable ignorance. He actually does not know that Aristophanes in the "Frogs," although he himself translated it, declares Euripides to be an innovator—in complete agreement with Mr. Rascoe. Surely after this the scholar is to be dismissed from our consideration.

And yet one very troublesome claim of scholars remains to be disposed of: they say they can read Greek easily. This, if true, would constitute a real claim to special privilege. But Mr. Rascoe demolishes it. He has a dark suspicion of general untrustworthiness on the part of anyone who declares he can read well a foreign tongue, but it reaches complete scepticism if that tongue is ancient Greek. Of course, the reason is clear. The idea of reading Greek easily is completely undemocratic. It is based upon the supposition that there are things the everyday man cannot do and, still worse, it suggests that the people who read it best can best judge it. So it is ruled out. It is false: Mr. Rascoe does not believe that anyone can read Greek with ease.

Oddly enough, he concentrates his attack upon those who claim to be able to read Sophocles. I confess this puzzles me. I should have thought other writers would be better examples of difficult Greek, Pindar, for instance, or Æschylus in all of his plays except the "Prometheus." But Mr. Rascoe has clearly suffered from Sophocles, and it is he he uses to lash the scholars with: "Whatever any Greek scholar may say to the contrary, Sophocles presents enormous difficulties when one tries to read him in the original." The scholar who claims to be able to understand him is simply telling lies. The truth is, Sophocles is so "excessively literary (*sic*) that we do not know what whole sentences and strophes in his text mean. We can only guess at them." And so he has become the scholars' delight, "a special pet and bugaboo with which to frighten the unscholarly." But no more. This malign power is now ended: "Whenever anybody writes about the superior enjoyment of reading Sophocles in the original because the poetry of Sophocles cannot be rendered into English that person is a humbug." Exit Sophocles along with all the hypocritical scholars who down the ages have cheated a credulous world into believing they really could read Greek.

Still another method of approach is necessitated by the democratic principle. In a democracy of free and independent citizens each man is to be his own standard. To look higher than one's own level would be a tacit admission of aristocracy. Mr. Rascoe measures all things by himself. What he does not understand—if there is such a thing—is negligible; what he most admires is most admirable. He is completely sincere in this conviction. He has never had an idea that there could be anything beyond him. Perhaps the most striking example of this attitude is what he says about tragedy. To him that strange transmutation of pain into exaltation which some of the world's greatest minds have puzzled over, is a perfectly simple and not very important matter: "After they had all had a good cry they felt better. That is all there is to Aristotle's famous doctrine of the 'purging of the emotions of pity and terror' by means of tragedy." For Mr. Rascoe never felt anything more than that when he saw "Lear" or "Hamlet"—never any exaltation touched him or glimpse of high passion awed him. Awe, of course, is a glimpse of incomprehensibles, and nothing is incomprehensible to Mr. Rascoe. And so that is all there is to tragedy—just a good cry.

Thus does Mr. Rascoe lay a broad and straight and well macadamized road through the great forest of knowledge, heretofore traversed only by circuitous ways where the question mark, abhorred of Mr. Rascoe, abounded, and the end was often a dark thicket of uncertainties now proved to be completely non-existent.

There is in an old medieval manuscript a catechism for the use of young aspirants to scholarship, which begins thus:

"What is a scholar?

"It is a man learning things excellent with assiduous care.

"Of what substance is the scholar?

"A substance endowed with the higher powers of the mind and sensitive, susceptible to learning and to excellence."

But of course Mr. Rascoe would tell me that this description is probably a mere pretension and is certainly completely dated.

EDITH HAMILTON.

(Miss Hamilton is the author of "The Greek Way" and the recently published "The Roman Way.")

To the Editor of the *Saturday Review:*

Sir: It is at times justifiable to overlook unfortunate lapses of taste or inaccuracies of fact. A failure of memory or a slip of the pen will sometimes plague even the most learned and honest writer. Such one corrects with mild irony or with friendly jest. But the satire of Mr. Arthur Colton in his review of Mr. Burton Rascoe's "Titans of Literature" is wasted. A few particles of disinfecting wit cannot cover a heap of literary rubbish. On its own merits the book deserves to be passed by in silent scorn; it is too absurd for serious consideration. It takes importance, however, from the fact that so-called leading critics have praised it for scholarship and for other qualities less essential to such a work. The list of admirers is long: Harry Hansen, Laurence Stallings, Lewis Gannett, William Soskin, Fanny Butcher, Herschel Brickell, Carl Van Doren, C. Hartley Grattan, Irita Van Doren, and Edmund Wilson. It needs only Mark Van Doren to make the opinion unanimous. The conclusion one is forced to draw from the combined praise of these critics is either that they have not read the book or that they are ignorant of the facts essential to a decent critical judgment of it. Neither conclusion flatters them or Mr. Rascoe.

Even in the face of such critical agreement, I am willing to be sufficiently academic to point out the inaccuracies of fact and deduction in parts of the volume.

The chapter on Defoe contains this passage:

> **He (Defoe) followed and developed the prose tradition of Shakespeare, and Dekker, of the anonymous translators of the Authorized Version of the Bible, of Jeremy Taylor, Abraham Cowley, John Evelyn, Samuel Pepys, and John Bunyan instead of the prose tradition of Sir Francis Bacon, Sir Thomas Browne, and John Milton; and so helped to emancipate English prose from the heaviness of ecclesiastical Latinity and from the cacophany of Anglo-Saxon polysyllables and to make it a medium of grace, easiness, clarity, levity, naturalness, and wit.**

The obvious comment is that any man who joins Bacon with Browne, and Taylor with Pepys as examples of *a* style has no right to talk about style at all; he either does not know the authors or he fails to understand style. In the second place just what are cacophanous Anglo-Saxon polysyllables? If they are polysyllables they are probably not Anglo-Saxon; if they are cacophonous they are probably not Latin! What also is the meaning of the word "anonymous" in this passage? Does Mr. Rascoe think the names should appear on the title page or does he believe that these translators of the Bible, listed in the Encyclopædia Britannica, are unknown? And finally does it enter his mind that perhaps not all writers desire levity or wit in their style, that naturalness may be less desired than art, that clarity is not antithetical to complexity, and finally that, as Taylor's sermons show, grace may be inherent in grandeur?

The chapter on Chaucer contains some remarkable facts. Mr. Rascoe says that Chaucer was taken prisoner "before Reims in *Edward II's* unsuccessful assault." He speaks of *Skeats*, the great authority on Chaucer. He says "there is an excellent version (of the "Canterbury Tales") in modern Anglo-American by William van Wyck." What is excellent about it, the drawings of Rockwell Kent? It bears about the same relation to Chaucer's work that water does to port, and does not have the compensation of being correct. He remarks, in speaking of Beowulf, "Let us, please, forget it." Thus it goes on the longest shelf in Mr. Rascoe's library. Apparently he has forgotten also the works of Chaucer; they receive about a page of superficial comment in a chapter of nine and one half pages.

In the chapter on Dante the author shows simple ignorance in saying that the "Divine Comedy" is not a comedy. Mr. Rascoe should learn that the word comedy, like other literary terms, has not always conveyed the same connotation or even denotation. Dante used it correctly in his day, and since the poem deals with otherworldly matters what more descriptive adjective could be chosen than "divine"? After making the startling discovery that the poem is not a story, Mr. Rascoe says: "Whatever truth there is in the 'Divine Comedy' is manifest, eternal, and apprehended by everybody." Apparently Mr. Rascoe does not include himself in "everybody," for when he says that the "allegory is not as sublime in conception as 'Pilgrim's Progress'" and that "there is no philosophical unity in the 'Divine Comedy'" he shows, with a terseness he cannot find in Dante, how shallow is his medieval knowledge and how cheap

(Continued on next page)

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This Will Never Do

(*Continued from preceding page*)

his effort to fathom the mind that had probed Aquinas.

However low in quality and learning the chapter on Dante may be, the bottom, from the critical and the scholarly viewpoint, is reached in the discussion of Milton. In the first place, the introductory paragraphs indicate clearly that a desire to be clever motivated the entire chapter. If the author really believes what he says he had no reason to include Milton among his Titans. The only way adequately to show the ineptitude of the chapter is to treat the errors of fact and of critical deduction in order. They follow:

(1) Mr. Rascoe states that in "Paradise Lost" Milton lacks (a) "commonsense, kindness, generosity, and give-and-take"; (b) "style, either grand or common." What have the qualities under *a* to do with an epic poem? Mr. Rascoe apparently does not realize that the intention of the author and the form he uses affect the material chosen. Qualified judges have differed as to the nature and value of Milton's thought but few who have read at all are unable to recognize a Miltonic passage listed anonymously amid the work of a dozen poets. If Mr. Rascoe means what he says, he cannot distinguish the work of Milton from that of Emily Dickinson unless their names are attached.

(2) Mr. Rascoe drags out Mr. Norman Douglas to reveal Milton's lack of originality. The whole evil secret is found in "Old Calabria." No doubt Mr. Douglas's qualities are many, but whether they fit him to discuss Milton is quite another matter. At least one fact is obvious; namely, that he has only scratched the surface of Milton's "sources." Mr. Rascoe speaks of "Paradise Lost" as "a mosaic of pilferings from Æschylus, Ovid, Ariosto, Masenius, Cedmon, Vondel, and others." Yes, many others, such as Homer, Pindar, Hesiod, Virgil, Horace, Euripides, Plato, Augustine, Hilarius, Tertullian, Jerome; the authors of the Bible, the Talmud, and the Cabala; Dante, Spenser, Shakespeare, Tasso, Andrieni, Lancetta, Grotius, Du Bartas and *others*. Mr. Rascoe does not know the process of Milton's mind. He did not make a mosaic of passages; he used ideas. He did, in other words, what every genius of the first rank has done. He achieved that highest originality which comes out of the synthesis of observation and reading. Does Mr. Rascoe think that originality consists in creating *de novo*? Does he believe that something can be made of nothing? Anyone with artistic perception recognizes that in Milton, as in Chaucer and in Shakespeare, the wonder of originality lies in the transmutation of material. It should be pointed out, further, that in Milton's day educated readers would be able readily to identify any real pilfering but that on the other hand they would enjoy the recognition of a familiar passage transformed; that Milton, in his art was a classicist, one of that school which considered the restatement of a notable idea in more perfect form a high attainment of art; and that when Milton wrote "Paradise Lost" he was totally blind and hence dependent wholly on his memory and the reading of friends. The latter did not possess the learning to help him plagiarize. Is it reasonable to consider his memory so prodigious as to have been capable of remembering the design of an obscure work he had read twenty years before, together with all the detailed passages he is supposed to have stolen elsewhere. The fact is that he possessed the great books of the world in the truest sense; he had made them his intellectually and emotionally. When he came to write they influenced him in a way that no one has ever been able to explain fully about any artist.

(3) Mr. Rascoe waxes merry over a famous passage from "The Reason of Church Government." He sneers at the fact that Milton believed himself especially fitted for the task he had chosen because he was a Christian. No one can deny that a man who intends to write a work involving Christian ideals will be better equipped than one like Homer or Æschylus or even like Job who never heard of Christ. Only Mr. Rascoe can learn facts by divination! He says further that Milton calls all previous English poets "unskilful . . . monks and mechanics." This is simply not true. The implication is Mr. Rascoe's. Furthermore in the pamphlet preceding the one quoted, Milton praised and quoted Spenser, and his first published poem honored Shakespeare. Apparently Mr. Rascoe has not seen "Eikonoclastes" which contains matter more to his purpose.

(4) Mr. Rascoe is satirically contemptuous of Milton's references to his Italian journey and the praise he received. Milton states two facts, first that continental Europeans of that age were sparing in their praise of Englishmen as scholars and artists, and second, that he received generous commendation. Both facts are true. Why do they annoy Mr. Rascoe? Didn't Horace, who is "perfect" say: "Exegi monumentum ære perrennius . . ." And why instead of writing the cheap chauvinistic remark about Milton prefering the praise of Italians to that of his countrymen did not Mr. Rascoe read, further in the treatise, the passage where Milton craves the commendation of Englishmen alone?

(5) Mr. Rascoe, quoting Milton's remark about prelaty as an obstacle to free writing, observes, with manifest pride in his learning, that "the influence of Catholic prelates in England had been vastly curtailed." Surely he must know that Milton referred to the prelates of the Church of England. Milton wrote his early pamphlets to help destroy the Anglican Church; straw men were not *his* opponents.

(6) Mr. Rascoe gets himself beautifully involved by trying to show that Milton gave up the subject of Arthur after he had seen Salandra's "Adamo Caduto." He says subtly that the play "was not published until six years after the pamphlet, 'The Reason of Church Government,'" in which Milton speaks of a historical subject. But Mr. Rascoe does not seem to know, first, that, when Milton returned from Italy where he might, of course, have seen or read Salandra's play he still intended to write of Arthur ("To Manso" and "Epitaphium Damonis") or, secondly, that six years before Salandra's play was published Milton made a list of one hundred possible subjects and that the four most completely developed deal with Adam. Anyone who knows anything about Milton is familiar with this list.

(7) Mr. Rascoe quotes Norman Douglas as saying that Salandra may have given Milton a manuscript copy of the play, knowing that he was "a famous and influential man in England." Wise fellows, Salandra, Mr. Douglas, and Mr. Rascoe, to know that fact, puzzling no doubt to Milton's shade, and most surprising to those who know Milton's obscurity in England in 1639.

(8) Mr. Rascoe sagely adds: "There is also the fact that Milton had correspondents in Italy (he met Grotius in Paris and Galileo in Florence as well as other famous personages of his time) who may have sent him a copy of the tragedy when it was published." This *is* a fact among facts, as the following facts indicate. (1) When Milton met Galileo the latter was a blind old man whose contacts with outsiders were closely guarded. (2) Grotius does not seem to have been in Italy at all (unless Mr. Rascoe thinks Paris was in Italy at that time). (3) "Adamo Caduto" was published in 1647. (4) Galileo died in 1642. (5) Grotius died in 1645. (6) In 1647 direct communication had ceased between the earth and the shades.

(9) Mr. Rascoe thinks that M. Saurat's "Milton; Man and Thinker" is a charming book about himself, apropos of Milton. A good book about M. Saurat ought to be charming indeed, for he is a charming man. His own books about Milton (there are three, of course) happen to be contributions to Milton scholarship of the first order. If Mr. Rascoe would read them carefully he would find many more "pilferings" to add to the "pastiche." Perhaps, however, Mr. Rascoe should not be considered to know this matter too well; he apparently thinks M. Saurat is a modern French painter since he twice spells the name Seurat.

(10) Mr. Rascoe asks: "Now what did Milton contribute to 'Paradise Lost' that was his own?" He answers: "He contributed, or worked in, the notion that Man is the highest of God's creatures, Lord of the Universe, and that Woman should be subservient to man always, never thinking for herself. He embellished Salandra's character of Satan, who, in modern theatrical parlance, 'runs away with the show.' And he transliterated Salandra into austere and stately blank verse." If memory serves, Moses stated that God himself had intimated something similar to the first idea. Milton, therefore, did not originate *that*. The embellishing and transliterating, however, are apparently entirely original.

(11) Mr. Rascoe is confused about the thought of "Paradise Lost." What interests him most is the treatment of the character of Eve and Milton's attitude toward women generally. Nothing can be done

(*Continued on page* 360)

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Blood Will Tell

"DID you ever stop to think," began Willowby (who is one of those persons who look upon ratiocination as a stationary process), "did you ever stop to think that every creature that lives or has lived, human or sub-human, has or had a pedigree? Only in impressive instances, of course, is the pedigree set down and perpetuated. A mongrel cur has as definite and factual a lineage as any ribbon winner. The spavined nag that hauls a junk wagon somewhat less decrepit than itself had the same number of parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents as Twenty Grand. The latest wood alcohol victim flung into Potter's Field may actually be the last of the Plantagenets."

Willowby's discourses are invariably prefaced with just such a bundle of flagrant specifications in support of just such a hopelessly tenable generalization. You cannot confound a man who insists that the earth is round. Nothing could be more obvious than the thesis that life has always been ancestored. I could think of no annihilating rebuttal—I could not even recall at the moment who the last of the Plantagenets really was.

"There's Topsy," I suggested, but Willowby took her in his stride.

"Fictional character," he footnoted. "Glad you mentioned her. For what I am saying is just as true of collected books as it is of animate nature, and when I started my intention was to lead up to books. Every book has been owned by someone since its original fabrication—I wonder, by the way, what is the largest number of owners a single copy of a book has ever had, and what the book was? Sometimes we know exactly who the previous owners have been, in unbroken sequence, down to the first purchase perhaps three centuries ago. Often, I suppose, one ought not pry too closely into a bibliophilic lineage, precisely as one should not slide too far down the trunk of one's family tree—there is bound to be gallows-fruit somewhere in the lower branches. So of a book—go far enough back and you will find a sneak-thief running down the street with it. If this regrettable incident (I trust it was duly regretted) happened long enough ago no questions are asked, just as one can joke about a cognate sheep-stealer in Devonshire eight generations since but is silent regarding a paternal pickpocket in Fall River in 1888. The Devonian has a romantic appeal—to his ultimate, not to his immediate descendants—but it is the sort of romance that operates inversely. You've seen the crowds that cluster about the Mona Lisa in the Louvre (how overwhelmed they are to discover that it's such a small canvas!) only because she was slit out of her frame in their own century, but no one looks at a neighboring Van Dyck which was stolen just as literally and effectually by a grand larcenist named Napoleon a hundred and twenty-five years ago.

"To return to this business of pedigrees, however"—and chief among Willowby's multitude of failings is the fact that, like De Quincey, he is perpetually digressing and, like a homing pigeon, perpetually finding his way back—"to return to this business of pedigrees. I spent an evening with Thurks last week and he was showing me some of his minor Elizabethans. The major difficulty with the minor Elizabethans is that the rare book trade has never properly evaluated their minority, which is one reason I've never gone in for them. And to go in for them you've got to know your stud-book as well as your pocketbook. Thurks had a copy of something or other that had been in the Earl of Eastminster's collection for upward of two hundred years—"

"Was it John Taylor's 'The Olde, Old, Very Olde Man: or The Age and long Life of Thomas Par, The Sonne of John Parr of Winnington in the Parish of Alberbury; in the County of Salopp (or Shropshire), who was Borne in the Raigne of King Edward the 4th, and is now living in the Strand, being aged 152 years and odd Monethes'?" I asked with an irony so weighty it grounded before it could reach Willowby.

"Don't be silly. The original Shropshire lad, eh? Pretty liberal with par in those days, too. Let me finish: This book had been in the Eastminster collection for some two hundred years—not the same earl all the time, of course—oh, now I see your little joke. Even if you're going to be funny you've got to hear this through. Take a pencil and jot these names down.

"From the Eastminster collection (the Chartist riots appear to have frightened the eleventh earl out of his books) it went to the Smith, then to the Brown, the Robinson, the O'Brien—no, there was somebody ahead of O'Brien—oh, yes, Percival—*then* O'Brien, then Abendsonnenschein, then Zabbaglione, then Plunkett. So you see Thurks has the Eastminster-Smith-Brown - Robinson - Percival - O'Brien-Abendsonnenschein - Zabbaglione - Plunkett copy."

"Of what, did you say?"

"I *didn't* say. I don't remember. Some minor Elizabethan drama or interlude or mask—something of that sort. The title page had a very naïve kind of border made out of type ornaments. Lovely eighteenth century binding, blue levant, with the Eastminster crest. Charming little thing altogether."

J. T. W.

A TYPOGRAPHICAL COMMONPLACE BOOK. By MONROE WHEELER. Paris: Harrison. 1932.

FRENCH printing, like French theater, is either superb or rowdy. Rowdy printing came in on the heels of the Didots, and there has been a resurgence in recent years. The theory is, apparently, that the design of a type face doesn't matter—that anything is good enough for something. It is a Gallic theory which does not harmonize with Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic ideas of typography, and whether the printed product is a book of the French Romantic period (as can be seen in a current exhibition in the Yale University Library), or the latest number of *Arts et Métiers Graphiques*, no *tour de force* can make the favorite type faces of eighty years ago anything but awkward, wretchedly designed mavericks. Mr. Wheeler's book has too many of such type faces in it. He has composed, in different type faces and in various arrangements, thirty-four literary quotations, his authors ranging from Anaxagorous to Cocteau. It must have been good fun to do this, the sort of thing every printer would like sometime to do. Such a *projet* opens a wide field for inventiveness, cleverness, skill of hand in type setting. The objection to it, as to so much modern French printing, is that it smells of absinthe.

ANNALS OF AN ERA: Percy MacKaye and the MacKaye Family, 1826-1932. Washington: Pioneer Press (published under the auspices of Dartmouth College). 1932.

HEREIN is a list of everything which any member of the MacKaye family, beginning with Steele MacKaye (1805-1888), has ever written, everything which has been written about them or their work, references or quotations from famous men about the MacKayes and their works. Over six hundred pages, most of it in six point, much of it in five point type; somewhere between four and five hundred thousand words! The bibliographer's ideal in fulness and minuteness, meticulously documented and edited, the book is sheer bio-bibliographical exhibitionism. Also, it must have been a printer's nightmare, though out of the welter of "copy" he has produced a soundly printed volume—no one could make it more than a workmanlike book. Even the five point type (fourteen lines of it go in an inch!) is printed sharp and clear on the rag paper of the 110 copies issued.

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News from the States

What the SATURDAY REVIEW *most desires for this department is the pithy paragraph upon some significant matter, whether in relation to author's activities, bookselling activities and problems, the trend of reading in a particular territory, or allied matters. Booksellers' anecdotes will be welcomed. It is our aim to furnish a bird's-eye view of reading and writing America which will prove valuable both to our subscribers and to the book world at large. We hope that our subscribers will submit items from time to time.*

ARIZONA

From Tucson, a lady preferring anonymity comments on the fact that *Oliver Gogarty* is coming to America to lecture in January, and then, anent that eminent Irish writer, tells this very good ghost story:—

We were sitting in the moon-shadows of a pepper tree, and happened to speak of ghosts. "Did you ever see a ghost?" I said hopefully to Mrs. Robin Hunter (local book factotum). One never knows what one may draw out on such subjects from the Irish.

"No," she said, "but I slept in a room with one for a week without knowing it.

"I was quite a young girl and was staying with the Gogartys in a large old country home they had recently bought. It had a great many rooms, but they had fitted up only a small number at that time. Oliver telegraphed from London that he was bringing Augustus John down for the night; so my sister (Mrs. Gogarty) said I would have to move to one of the unfurnished rooms while he was there. I looked some of them over, and chose a nice one with large barred windows. The workman who was to get it ready for me said, 'You don't want this room, do you? Nobody ever uses this room.' But I paid no attention to him.

"When I had blown out my candle for the night, I thought there was someone in the room with me; you know the feeling you have when there is someone near you. I called out, 'Who's there?' But nothing happened. I got up and lit the candle, but couldn't see anything. Every night I stayed in that room, as soon as I blew out the candle I had that same feeling. I told the others, and they laughed at me. After a week, I went back to my old quarters.

"I happened to remember about the workman who was surprised at my choosing that room. We made inquiries, and found that it had been occupied by a boy, a son of the house, who went insane at fourteen. His parents put bars on the windows, because he used to climb out and get on the roof, and it was a lot of trouble to get him back. He had finally died.

"About that time Willie Yeats came to visit. He was delighted to hear the story, and asked to be allowed to call on the ghost at midnight. In the morning he reported a long conversation with the boy. He said he asked the ghost what it was he wanted; why he troubled the people in the house, and the boy replied that he didn't like to have strangers in his home and in his room."

FLORIDA

Lois F. Duboin, as Chairman of the Citizens' Committee for an Adequate Public Library, writes us from Miami:—

Miami, though a city of 110,000, has no Public Library. The small one it did have, run by a woman's club, has now gone on a fee basis, open part time. My reason for broadcasting this pathetic situation is, a small group of interested citizens are working for the passage of a city ordinance permitting a millage tax, to be levied for library purposes. Now, during the winter season, we have many prominent writers who sojourn a short time in our midst. If these happy folk, who come under the genus tourist, once within our borders, related their distress at such a situation, the barometer of public opinion, always extremely sensitive to tourist criticism, would react sharply in favor of an adequate library.

LOUISIANA

From the town of Monroe writes *Lillian Herron Williamson*:—

The four people in our state who are doing most towards developing a regional literature are *Roark Bradford, Lyle Saxon, Ada Jack Carver*, and *Blanche G. Oliver*. While the literary quality of Mrs. Oliver's work is not as good as that of the first three, she is much more of an artist than any of them, for she not only writes but has composed a number of Cajun songs and music and negro spirituals. These she interprets in a way that no one else seems to be able to do. She and Lyle Saxon have been lifelong friends and grew up together.

Corn pone and pot liquor constitute a Southern dish which has gained national repute because of the controversy as to whether the proper way to eat it, is to dunk, crumble, or sop the pone into the liquor. Mrs. Oliver's little book of versified negro philosophy is entitled "Cawn Pone an' Pot Likker." There has been no attempt to be too exact with the spelling of the dialect. Only the flavor has been given, in the hope that it can be read without effort by Northerner and Southerner alike. Whether one is a Dunker, a Crumbler, or a Sopper, makes no difference. He will get a true picture of the character of the Southern negro of today.

"Cawn Pone an' Pott Likker" is so far as we know, the first book ever published on cotton bond. The first edition was printed on the white cotton and the third printing on a cream which is almost yellow. The author is not only an artist in her interpretation of the negro in print but is even better when she does it orally. It takes an artist to pronounce ear as though it were a cross between "year" and "yeah" as our negroes do.

One of the best things Mrs. Oliver has done is her Flood suite which has been played many times by the Shreveport Symphony orchestra. In the development of a regional literature in the Northern part of the state, *Ada Jack Carver* and *Blanche Oliver* stand out, but the latter occupies a place alone in her development of a regional music for this section. They are good friends and Ada Jack says that while she wrote "The Cajun" only Blanche Oliver can interpret it. At the present time Mrs. Oliver is working on a musical story of the Acadians.

NORTH CAROLINA

Waldeen H. White informs us:—

Perhaps the book arousing most interest in North Carolina at present is the enormous just-out, though long heralded, "Bernard Shaw: Playboy and Prophet," by *Dr. Archibald Henderson* of The University of North Carolina. Simultaneously with the appearance of the book, comes from Chapel Hill, *Contempo: A Review of Books and Personalities*, devoting its pages to Shaw and his biographer, displaying some unique and fascinating Shaviana in the possession of Dr. Henderson. Beside the "Salute" which opens the volume, a letter from Shaw to *Contempo*, and a critical review by Barrett H. Clark, the number carries verse in which Shaw answers Dr. Henderson's inquiry as to the pronunciation of Dean Inge's name and a column of "When Shaw Reads Proofs of His Biography" quoting notes written by Shaw on the margin of the galley proofs, such as "Damn your American sentimentality!", "Utter bosh," "Wake up," and "You're crazy!!!!!" "Wild and jingo American," "Oh Chapel Hill Chapel Hill! Sancta Simplicitas" and "Archibald!!! Why all the Georges? I'm tired of being Georged! Immortalize me as Bernard Shaw, or even as G. B. S. but not as George Bernard Shaw."—Such notations were made in red ink we are told, as distinct from the black ink notations which were direct suggestions for revision.

Another item of at least local interest is a first dramatization of the popular *Joel Chandler Harris* stories by *Dr. J. Roddy Miller*, a native Southerner on the faculty of Greensboro College, Greensboro, N. C. The manuscript was reviewed and permission for production granted by *Mrs. Esther LaRose Harris*, widow of Joel Chandler Harris, and a presentation given recently by the college players with Dr. Miller playing the role of Uncle Remus. Pink-eared Brer Rabbit projecking in the moonlight, Mis' Meadows and the gals and the creeturs dancing the Virginia Reel in Mis' Meadows fire-lit cabin delighted children young and old who attended.

OHIO

Edmund Vance Cooke died on Sunday afternoon, December 18th, at his home on Mayfield Road, in Cleveland, Ohio; and *Katharine Garford Thomas* sends us the following written upon the occasion of his death:—

Although born in Port Dover, Ontario, Canada, Mr. Cooke received his education in the Cleveland schools, for he came when a very young boy to Cleveland with his parents. His education was finished at night school. He was always a voracious reader and early showed an aptitude towards verse, although his first accepted manuscript was a story which he sold to a boy's paper for five dollars. For several years he sold his poems to syndicates, and they were widely published throughout the country. His lecturing took him abroad for fifteen trans-continental tours where he became the friend of many of the outstanding writers of the time. He did as much lecturing in America, especially before students. Edwin Markham was an intimate friend whom he often visited and who in turn was a guest at Mr. Cooke's home.

Edmund Vance Cooke was said to have more intellectual idiosyncrasies than any other man in Cleveland—being a vegetarian, a champion of the single tax, a militant exponent of the "rights of man," and a political, social, and religious non-conformist. He was dubbed "Cleveland's hatless poet." Since he discarded his hat twenty years ago he was almost daily seen walking through the streets of his city bareheaded.

His first book of poems, "A Patch of Pansies," was published when the poet was twenty-seven. There followed twenty-three other volumes. He especially enjoyed writing children's poetry. He felt that Eugene Field and Robert Louis Stevenson had written what he called "parental poetry," and he wished to write the "child kind" which "was the reflection of the child's soul in child language." He proved that this might be successfully done by writing his "MooCow, Moo," which was inspired by a remark that his daughter made when she was young: "Don't go away, Daddy, I'm afraid if the moo cow moos."

Mr. Cooke was a friend of the late Tom L. Johnson; it was Mr. Cooke who wrote the inscription that appears upon Mr. Johnson's monument, "A man is passing."

Edmund Vance Cooke leaves a son and daughter to mourn his death but also many friends throughout the nation. Cleveland has lost two poets within a year, Hart Crane and Edmund Vance Cooke.

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S. T. R. Am not uncommunicative. Scrutinize "Review" November 26. Hope honey's molars happy. Tenderly. K. B.

DEAR "Personal" Dept. The Saturday Review: Are there no more oldfashioned book lovers like Montana's? "Emma," *Saturday Review.*

N. A. G.: Merci bien. Ecrivez, encore, s. v. p., le même nom de plume, *Saturday Review.*

JEAN. Please write further particulars, for reply. Address C, *Saturday Review.*

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The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTINUING our attack on slovenly English, we print the following communication received from the Librarian of the Harvard Club, *Earle F. Walbridge:*

The battle against sloppiness in contemporary writing which you started last October isn't won yet, by a long shot. Even the *Atlantic Monthly* has fallen from grace with a dull thud. Witness the article by *Norman Hapgood* in the January issue (*"Will Hays*—and What the Pictures Do For Us"). Quoting the Hays moral code for pictures (p. 82), he says: "The sanctity of marriage shall be upheld, and pictures shall not *infer* [italics mine] that irregular ('low' is the word used) forms of the relationship are accepted or common."

Slightly discouraged, I finished reading the *Atlantic* and took up *John Chamberlain's* "Farewell to Reform." I coasted happily along in that most readable book until I was brought up short by this passage (p. 290): "Ultimately he [Woodrow Wilson, of course] broke with his most faithful retainer and friend, Colonel House. The record is not envious; doubtless it proves something."

À la lanterne!

Now, according to *The Golden Book,* they have named a city for one of the few old régime writers in Russia who have become active communists. In honor of *Maxim Gorky,* the city which used to be called Nizhni Novgorod has received the new appellation of Gorkygrad. It is now the place where they manufacture Red automobiles instead of being one of the cities that knew the Terror of the Volga of old time, Stenka Razin. . . .

A new quarterly, the first issue of which is just out, is *Economic Forum,* a review of the Economics of Today, of which *Joseph Mead* and *William McC. Martin, Jr.* are the editors and publishers. The address is 66 West 12th Street. . . .

A most exciting event in the annals of the *Saturday Review of Literature* was the wedding on Tuesday, December 27th, at the Church of St. Angela Merici, 163rd Street, this city, of *Eileen Murphy,* distinguished Mermaid of the *Review,* to *Vincent Arkins,* notable Mariner. After the event the happy couple repaired to Bermuda for their honeymoon. . . .

Jeannette Hall of Fort Worth, Texas, favors us with the following sonnet:

I HOPE WHEN I REACH HEAVEN

I hope when I reach Heaven, that I shall see
(If I be let to enter), not the vain
Prim souls alone, but some who bore the pain
Of living stoutly, though not faultlessly:
Shakespeare, bright-eyed, alert, as once fared he
Up Stratford street, though dubbed a poacher plain;
Scotch Mary with her white throat free again
Of that red necklace hung by Jealousy—
(Did she not read her missal, sob her prayer?)
Napoleon, with his lucky sun gone dim
Behind the dreary willows; deep set eyes
An eagle's, caged, a lion's in a snare.
Some One who knew defeat would pity him
And set him at His side in Paradise.

We heartily congratulate the *Governor of New Jersey* upon his refusing extradition in the case of the author of "I Am a Fugitive." Fearless independence among our judiciary is a virtue that will always have our enthusiastic endorsement. It is a virtue rarely found. . . .

We thought we were one of the very few who remembered that a boys' book issued years ago by Stokes and entitled "Hike and The Aeroplane" was really the first novel of *Sinclair Lewis,* Nobel Prize Winner! "Hike" came out in 1912. One thousand copies were printed and less than eight hundred were sold and Lewis says it will never be reprinted. His own copy is inscribed: "To Sinclair Lewis from the author, *Tom Graham,* his altered ego." And the information just given may be found in *Harvey Taylor's* bibliography included in "Sinclair Lewis: A Biographical Sketch," by *Carl Van Doren,* to be published by Doubleday, Van Doren—we mean Doran, on January 3rd. . . .

On Friday Evening, January 13th, the Editor of this periodical, *Dr. Henry Seidel Canby,* will be Chairman at a debate under the auspices of the Pen & Hammer, an organization of scientists and professional persons with headquarters at 114 West 21st Street, New York City. The debate will be held, however, at the Engineering Auditorium, 25 West 39th Street, and will be between *Ernest Boyd,* the well-known literary critic, and *Michael Gold,* editor of *The New Masses.* The question will be "Resolved; That the Marxian approach to literature is the only scientific and correct one." Mr. Gold will, naturally, take the affirmative. . . .

In our own eccentric opinion it seems perfectly irrational to say that any particular approach to literature is the only scientific and correct one. The insistence of the Communists that only under the dispensation of Communism will literature justify its existence has disposed of them, for us, as rational controversialists. How is it possible to be so cocksure in such a bewildering world? Such Communists are simply and merely fanatics, and the fanatic is an old phenomenon. His thought-track is so narrow that, naturally, he believes he is in the possession of universal and exact truth. As a matter of fact he is the perfection of narrow-mindedness. We should hate the triumph of such Communists, from which all true artists would revolt. Imagine being dictated to by such zealots? But what some people don't know doesn't exist for them. The Capitalist refuses to see economic conditions that are right in front of his nose. The Communist refuses to recognize the independence of the human spirit when it is spang before his face. Meanwhile we shall go out and sit on a high fence and throw snowballs at the crows.

Dr. Cyril Alington, Head Master of Eton, will sail for America next week at the invitation of the Kentucky Chapter of the English-Speaking Union of the United States. On December 28, Dr. Alington will be the guest of the English-Speaking Union at dinner at the Hotel Astor, this city. In February, Longmans, Green will publish Dr. Alington's "The Fool Hath Said." . . .

In this book Dr. Alington hopes to give encouragement to those who profess the Christian faith. We hope he may. It has decided points as a faith, though there are a lot of other faiths quite as good in their way. We have our own very weird private faith, though we don't know what to call it. But we'd hate to have to read books in order to bolster it up, when of course and of necessity it is wildly illogical and intellectually indefensible. From our youth up we have heard parsons trying to prove that faith had something to do with intellect. Obviously it hasn't anything whatever to do with what we call intellect. It is entirely a matter of your heart. When our heart is feeling in good shape we would just as lief believe that pigs have wings. It seems to us, then, a glorious idea, promoting joy and delight, and a conception that does no one any possible harm. So it is with the story of Adam and Eve. A swell story. Full of poetry and drama. It has been used over and over again in literature and it is still good. If you believe it—an act of faith—it shows that you have no brains at all on that subject but that your heart is as big as a wagon and you are probably (if it doesn't make you a bigot—which it probably will) a lovely, childlike creature we should like to meet. But we could never understand how grown-up people can go on saying something is *so* when they know darn well all the time there is no possible way of proving it *is* so—and getting horribly cross at anybody who contradicts them, and burning them at stakes and things in order to save their souls! Honestly—such goings on! And religious wars over the nature of the Holy Ghost or something! History is incredible. The truth is, Mankind has always supremely loved a good bloody fight and, in the old days, only needed the slightest of excuses to plunge in, shouting "Hurroo!" and swinging a knobkerry or whatever. But think of heads of great schools like Eton still trying to tell Christians that there is any logic in their kind of Christianity! There is sublime logic in many of the things Christ said, but no one pays the slightest attention to them, least of all Christians. . . .

Well! We seem to have shot you quite a fine little Christmas sermon. You're welcome to it. And a Happy New Year to you all!

THE PHŒNICIAN.

This Will Never Do

(*Continued from page* 358)

about that confusion now. During the two years he spent at College (one of which he devoted to a study of Old English because of the unusual curriculum used at the University of Chicago in 1911-1913) Mr. Rascoe's professors told him he would not understand "Paradise Lost" until he was forty. He sadly complains that he is over forty and still cannot fathom the poem, carelessly forgetting that the dim-witted but polite teachers did not refer to merely physical age.

(12) Mr. Rascoe says: "Nearly all critics have agreed that Satan is the real hero of 'Paradise Lost.'" Does he mean the same critics who agree about his book? If so no reference should be made to Masson, Pattison, Hanford, Saurat, Grierson, Tillyard, or Saintsbury.

(13) Mr. Rascoe says *inter alia* that "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" are sophomoric compositions, that "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" will, in time, be considered mere curiosities of literature." He certainly should know a sophomoric composition or a literary curiosity when he sees one. The point is, therefore, difficult to dispute.

(14) Mr. Rascoe states in the biographical as distinguished from the "critical" part of the chapter the following entirely new facts.

(a) "His rebellion (at Cambridge) was at once a monumental self-satisfaction and a monumental dissatisfaction with himself." In such terse and significant words a difficult biographical problem is solved.

(b) "From Horton he begins to write letters (the Elegies) to his friends." His rustication from Cambridge apparently followed the Horton period.

(c) "He was received everywhere (in Europe) with that deference accorded a man of letters with two degrees from Cambridge." "Letters" here means, of course, letters of introduction, since Milton's first volume appeared in 1645.

(d) Birrell is quoted as saying Milton created "an all too flattering impression of an English Protestant" (the two adverbs are kind). The impression was so flattering that Manso and others ceased to entertain him.

(e) "'Areopagitica' was . . . written . . . out of disappointment because the Round Heads had closed the theatres as incitements to vice whereas his principal ambition was to write great dramatic works which would be produced on the stage." Only a few unusually keen readers of the tract have previously detected this. The pamphlet is really an allegory in which unlicensed printing means theatre and imprimatur stands for box office, that is what stands in front.

(f) "Milton believed connubial pleasures should be austere." Saurat proves this conclusively on the basis of passages in "Paradise Lost!"

(g) "'The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates' was an argument after the fact." It is very unusual, or it was in those queer times, for an explanation to follow rather than precede an action. Milton was unconventional, however, and published the tract only one month after the execution of Charles I.

h) "The pamphlet made so little stir that Charles II did not include Milton among the regicides called to account after the Restoration." So little stir that Milton became Secretary of State for Foreign Tongues a month after it appeared. Of course, Charles II was a stupid fellow; he thought the regicides were the judges who condemned his father. Everyone knows that Milton headed the list of those pardoned in 1660 and was quite undisturbed in fame and fortune.

The melancholy list could be extended by further references to the Dante and Milton chapters and by copious quotation from that on Virgil. The vapid biographical rehashes that profess to present Byron and Shelley could be analyzed. But to what purpose? The point is clear. What does it all mean? Simply this; that it is ridiculous for a man to be called vivid, lively, enthusiastic, exciting, alert, honest, spontaneous and frank if he has no facts on which to base his judgments. It means also that the columnists and journalists who pose as critics do not possess the knowledge or judgment necessary to fulfil their function. It is time for plain speaking. A man or woman who calls the substance of this book scholarship or literary criticism, or recommends it as "just the sort of book that was needed" is either hopelessly or wilfully ignorant.

DONALD A. ROBERTS.

College of the City of New York.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*

Sir: I know I am behind the times, for I have only now read Hendrik Van Loon's "Geography." By this time, Mr. Van Loon has, likely as not, prepared a "Cosmography" or a "Theogony"—and I am writing to a Review of Current Literature about his "Geography." Nevertheless, with your permission, I will record my grievance; for such it is.

Like all the world, I am fond of Hendrik Van Loon, and think very well of him to boot. That is why I am innocent enough to believe that he wants his book, at bottom, to have an educational and scientific virtue; and thence, in spite of my carefree joy in his "Geography," comes my simple-minded grief over it. I admire, of course, his irreverent Puck's-ease of voyaging through skies and seas and over the continents; and I don't gravely mind his world-and-time encompassing *obiter dicta.* Some of them sound good to me, and, anyway, they are his essayist's privilege of "philosophizing." I won't even get wroth with his Nordicism, conscious and unconscious—Mr. Van Loon is a Dutchman, and, like the rest of us, has his hyphen. But I believe I have a right to complain—and not jestingly, either—of our geographer's behavior toward his data—I mean plain, ordinary "facts and figures." To illustrate. A lot of us, today, are worried over the problem of a mutilated Hungary; so is Mr. Van Loon, very sincerely. Yet he all but washes out the ground of his, and our, worry by telling us, long before he arrives at his chapter on Hungary, indeed in the early part of his book, that among the smaller remnants of the European population "are a couple of million Magyars or Hungarians." Not, mind you, a couple of million torn from the main body and put under alien rule, but a couple of million altogether. If Mr. Van Loon had multiplied his number by four, he would have been only a little under the correct figure.

Another illustration. When Mr. Van Loon comes to Czechoslovakia, he gives the Czechs a quite helpful boost by lifting their total to 9,000,000; but he over-compensates by multiplying their (to his view) antagonists, the Slovaks, by two, raising them to 4,000,000, in place of their modest 2,000,000. This case, though, like that of the Hungarians, is one merely af statistics, and Mr. Van Loon amiably confesses at the end (not the beginning) of his book, that he is not strong on numbers.

But our writer's light-hearted play is not with numbers only. Never mind now that Czechoslovakia seems to interest him most as an example of the Central European quarrels of nationalities, but ponder the information offered, that the high (inter-Slav) animosity is "between the Catholic Czechs and the Protestant Slovaks." Now it is true that the Slovaks have a considerable Protestant minority, and that this minority constitutes the educationally and socially ripest part of the Slovak folk; but it is precisely this part which is most heartily devoted to the new republic and the union with the Czech, whereas the unlettered, passionately Catholic peasant has many a misgiving, not so much toward the republic itself, but toward "the godless Czech." Mr. Van Loon is not a world-geographer only, but a world-historian as well; he ought to require no explanation of the phrase "godless Czechs," whether applied at this moment or back clear through to the time of John Huss. If he does require it, he is not equipped to "size up" Czechoslovakia, "geographically" or otherwise.

There are still other points of inaccuracy in this three-page chapter on Czechoslovakia; but his whole book is littered with too, too much of the same thing. The case is the common, vulgar one of research made easy. There is my point and my plaint.

One cannot but wonder why a man of Hendrik Van Loon's marvellous giftedness can't do just the necessary amount better. When, O when, will our American writers, artists, and thinkers cease willy-nilly drawing their motivations and morals from the realm of business, and pay the deliberate price of *not* being a lot of that'll-doers and a-book-a-month men?

GEORGE REBEC.

University of Oregon.

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